SELECT

MORAL TALES.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH.

BRITISH
MUSEUM

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TRANSLATED FROM

THE FRENCH,

BY A LADY.

GLOCESTER:

PRINTED BY R. RAIKES, FOR THE EDITOUR.

M,DCC,LXIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Lady Elizabeth Mountague.

MADAM,

THE TALES, of which I have attempted a tranſlation, were intended by the author not only to exhibit a living picture of the manners of mankind, but to diſcloſe their ſecret ſprings in thoſe various modes of paſſion which a ſtate infinitely remote from the ſimplicity of nature has multiplied, almoſt without end, in thoſe parts of Europe, which, like England and France, have admitted the laſt refinements of life, and all the artificial cauſes of deſire

and

and averſion, pleaſure and diſguſt, which have neceſſarily ariſen from them.

To thoſe who are conſtantly approached by others with all thoſe arts of politeneſs by which they habitually throw a veil over deſigns and ſenſations, which would otherwiſe be diſcovered by every eye, ſuch a work is peculiarly adaptea; to whom then could it be more properly addreſſed than to you, a Lady in early youth, illuſtrious by deſcent, and whom the moſt amiable qualities promiſe to render equally conſpicuous by deſert? For the tranſlation, indeed, which Iam now permitted to put under your protection, I can only ſay, that being begun

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as an exerciſe in the French language, the partiality of my friends has induced me to publiſh it: this partiality is at leaſt a teſtimony of their affection, if not of my merit; and in this light their approbation is dearer to me than if it was more juſt. If my little work can boaſt of any other value, it is that which it derives from being the object of your indulgence, of which I ſhall always retain the moſt grateful ſenſe. I am, MADAM, *with the greateſt reſpect,*

Your moſt obliged,

and obedient humble ſervant,

THE EDITOUR.

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THE GOOD MOTHER.

TALE I.

OF all the duties incumbent on the world, there are none ſo ſtrongly enforced by nature as that of the care of a mother for her children: this univerſal ſentiment poſſeſſes an entire empire over all the paſſions; it prevails even above the love of life. In the brute creation it ſupplies the place of reaſon, by rendering the fierceſt animals ſoft and tender, the moſt timid courageous to an exceſs: not one of them ever leave their young until the time that their cares are no longer wanting. It is above all neceſſary in a world where vice, ingenious to diſguiſe

itſelf, puts on a thouſand ſeducing forms: it is there, that even the moſt happy have, while they are young, a conſtant demand for the watchful eye of a parent, beſet as they are with rocks, and continually in danger of being wrecked. How happy is the veſſel that is freighted with innocence, to be conſigned to the care of a wiſe pilot! What had been, for example, the fate of Miſs du Troene, if heaven had not given her a mother, ſuch as I am going to deſcribe?

This much-to-be-reſpected widow conſecrated to the education of her only daughter even the bloom of her life. In this manner ſhe reaſons with herſelf at the gay age of five and twenty: I have loſt my huſband, ſaid ſhe; there remains only my daughter and myſelf; ſhall I live for myſelf? or ſhall I live for her; the world may ſmile and pleaſe me

me once more; but if I deliver myſelf to that I abandon my child, and in hazarding her happineſs I loſe my own. Let us ſuppoſe that a tumultuous and diſſipated life has in it all the charms which the young and vain aſcribe to it; how little a time have I to taſte them? of the years which are now flying, how few have I to paſs in the world? how many in ſolitude and in the boſom of my child? that world which courts me to-day, will look upon me with indifference to-morrow; and if my daughter forgets herſelf through my example, if ſhe is unhappy by my negligence, what will be my conſolation? No, let me enjoy the peaceful happineſs of retirement, and ſacrifice to my daughter, who is every thing to me, this multitude of ſtrangers, to whom in a little time I ſhall be nothing.

At length this wiſe mother became the friend and confident of her daughter, but the obtaining of this was not the work of a day only. Emilia (that was the name of the young perſon) had received from nature a ſoul ſuſceptible of the moſt lively impreſſions, and her mother, who ſtudied her without ceaſing, felt a painful pleaſure in perceiving this ſenſibility in her daughter, which was capable of making her either completely happy or completely wretched.

Bleſſed, ſaid ſhe ſometimes to herſelf, bleſſed indeed will that huſband be whom ſhe ſhall love, if he be worthy of her tenderneſs; if, by mingled eſteem and affection, he knows how to render pleaſing to her that conſtant aſſiduity which ſhe will ſhew in ſerving him: but miſerable will that humility make her if he receive it unkindly: in vain will her wounded

wounded delicacy ſupplicate heaven for redreſs, when ſhe is once joined on earth to a perſon ſo unlike herſelf. I ſee, if at any time a reproof eſcapes me which ſhe has not deſerved, bitter tears flow from her eyes, and the grief of her heart appears in her dejected looks. Nothing can be more eaſy than to govern her with gentleneſs; but the leaſt roughneſs fills her with terror.

In this manner did Madam du Troene ſpend her time, wholly intent on the future happineſs of her daughter. As ſoon as Emilia grew to be of woman's eſtate, a crowd of admirers, fired with the charms of the young lady, made (according to the uſual cuſtom) an aſſiduous court to the mother. Of this number was the Marquis de Verglan, who had the misfortune to be endowed with a very fine perſon; and what his

glaſs told him, had been ſo often confirmed by the ladies eyes, that he had no doubt of the truth of it. His ſmiles ſhewed a conſcious ſenſe of his own attractions; every word and action ſerved to prove how fully he was ſatisfied with his own dear ſelf. If at any time he made a compliment it was ſo light in compariſon of the regard with which he honoured himſelf, that it might be clearly ſeen he occupied the firſt place in his own eſteem. Nature had liberally beſtowed on him many graces, but he ſpoiled them by affectation. With regard to wit, he only wanted juſtneſs, or rather reflection. No perſon had ſpoken better if he had known what he was going to ſay; but his firſt care was to have an opinion which was neither one thing or another, and had no regard either to right or to wrong. He knew by heart all the little talk of the toilet,

toilet, all the pretty words which mean nothing: he was well acquainted with every intrigue of the court and city, knew who was the lover of ſuch a fine lady at preſent, who would ſucceed him, how many times a year they had been changed, who had refuſed to be on the liſt, and who could ſupplant all his rivals if he thought it worth his while.

This young fop was the ſon of an old friend of M. du Troene, and the widow ſpoke of him to her daughter with a ſort of concern. It is pity, ſaid ſhe, that they have ſpoiled this young man; he is well born, and might ſucceed in life. But ſhe ſuſpected not that he had already but two-well ſucceeded in the heart of her Emilia. That which is ridiculous in the eyes of a mother is not always ſo in thoſe of a daughter; youth is indulgent to the follies of youth.

Verglan, on his ſide, found Emilia handſome enough, only a little too ſimple; though that might be reformed. He took but little pains to make himſelf pleaſing to her: but when the firſt impreſſion is made, every thing contributes to heighten it. The inconſtancy of this young coxcomb was one thing that attached Emilia the firmer to him. She ſaw the danger of loſing him, and nothing haſtens the progreſs of new-born love like the fear of a rival. The more pleaſure Emilia had in ſeeing and hearing him, the more care ſhe took to diſſemble it. One reproach from her mother would have been a dagger to her ſoul; and this delicate ſenſibility rendered her fearful to an exceſs.

At the ſame time that the charms of Emilia had thus weakly touched the heart of Verglan, they had inſpired the moſt

moſt tender love into that of the wiſe and modeſt Belzors. A mind truly juſt, and a heart ignorant of guile, formed the baſe of his character. His figure, engaging and open, was ſtill enobled by the high idea that at one view you conceived of his ſoul; for we are naturally diſpoſed to ſeek and to believe that we can diſcover in the lineaments of a man ſome knowledge of his heart. Belzors, to whom nature had been liberal in beſtowing the gifts of birth and fortune, poſſeſſed one advantage over others, that he could abandon himſelf to the enjoyment of them without precaution or reſtraint. Decency, honour, and candour, that frankneſs which gains confidence, that elevated rectitude of manners which inſpires reſpect, had in him the eaſy freedom of habit; an enemy to vice, but without rigidneſs; indulgent to follies, without contracting any himſelf: complying

plying with innocent cuſtoms, incorruptible by evil examples, he ſwam on the torrent of the world, loved and reſpected by thoſe to whom his life was a cenſure.

Madam du Troene, enchanted by the behaviour of this young gentleman, had in her own mind thought of him as the only perſon worthy of her daughter. She took every opportunity of commending him to her: Emilia joined in his praiſes with a modeſty ſuitable to her age; and Madam du Troene miſtook the ſweet ingenuous air, with which her daughter ſpoke of him, as a mark of that tender friendſhip which he had inſpired her with, and her ſoul rejoiced at it in ſecret. It would have been well, if the young lady could have been thus eaſy, thus tranquil, with the dangerous Verglan; but, on the contrary, if Madam

du

du Troene ſpoke of him, Emilia caſt down her eyes, and kept ſilence. It ſeems to me, daughter, ſays ſhe one day, that you have not a taſte for theſe brilliant graces, which the world ſo much admires: I don't underſtand them, Madam, ſaid Emilia bluſhing. The good mother diſſembled her joy; ſhe flattered herſelf ſhe ſaw in the heart of her daughter the ſimple and modeſt virtue of Belzors triumph over all the little dazzling follies of Verglan and his peers.

An accident, light in itſelf, but ſtriking to an attentive and diſcerning parent, drew her out of this illuſion. One of Emilia's talents was painting in crayons; ſhe had choſen the ſpecies of flowers to to exerciſe her genius on, as being the moſt analogous to her age; it appeared ſo natural to ſee a roſe opening from a beautiful hand! Verglan, by a taſte nearly

ly reſembling her own, paſſionately loved flowers, and never was ſeen without the prettieſt noſegay in the world.

One day the eyes of Madam du Troene were by chance fixed on the noſegay of Verglan; the next ſhe perceived that Emilia, perhaps without thinking of it herſelf, in painting her flowers, preſented to her eyes a copy of them ſhe had the preceding evening ſeen her lover wear. At the ſame time an air of enthuſiaſm appeared in her deſign; her eyes ſparkled with the fire of genius; her mouth ſmiled amouroufly at each touch of her hand; and a colour, more lively than that of the flower ſhe was painting, ſpread itſelf over her lovely cheeks.

Are you content with your performance? ſaid her mother in a careleſs manner. It is not poſſible, replied Emilia,

Emilia, to draw nature well when ſhe is not before our eyes; but I never more faithfully expreſſed her than now.

Some days after Verglan returned with new flowers. Madam du Troene, without ſeeming to do it, obſerved every one; and, in the next leſſon of Emilia, the noſegay of Verglan appeared. The good mother continued to obſerve, and each proof confirming her ſuſpicions, redoubled her inquietude. Alas! ſaid ſhe to herſelf, I am alarmed perhaps at what has nothing in it; let me wait and ſee if there is any meaning in it or not. The ſtudies and talents of Emilia were not only deſigned by her mother as an agreeable way of ſpending her leiſure hours, but alſo to give her a taſte for ſolitude, by ſaving her imagination from the danger of too much thought, and her active ſenſible ſoul from the melancholy

lancholy which often attends on idleneſs.

Though the cultivation of the daughter's happy genius was the chief object of the mother's care, yet Madam du Troene was equally ſollicitous to check every appearance of vanity in Emilia. One day, in a converſation with Belzors, the diſcourſe turned upon the great advantage of a conſtant employment of our time. My daughter, ſaid Madam du Troene, fills up her leiſure with an amuſement of which ſhe grows more and more fond; I muſt deſire ſhe would let you ſee her deſigns. Emilia opened her portfolio; and Belzors, enchanted, could not enough admire her ingenuity. How very delightful, ſaid he, are the pleaſures of innocence, while thoſe of vice are ever mixed with pain! Though it muſt be confeſſed, Miſs, that the hours paſs ſwiftly

ly away, yet they can hardly be ſaid to fly from you; by looking here you bring them again before your eyes; for time is only loſt to the idle. Madam du Troene heard him with complaiſance; Emilia found his diſcourſe very ſenſible, but was not touched by it.

Some days after Verglan came to ſee them: Do you know, ſaid Madam du Troene, that my daughter has received the praiſes of Belzors on her talent for painting? I am willing that you ſhould be judge too. Emilia interrupted, bluſhed, and, with great confuſion, ſaid ſhe had nothing finiſhed, and beſeeched her to wait 'till ſhe had ſomething worth the ſhewing. I ſee the reaſon of this myſtery, ſaid the diſcerning mother; ſhe fears Verglan will know his flowers, and penetrate into the ſecret motive of her painting them; my daughter loves this young

young coxcomb, my fears are but too well founded.

Madam du Troene, ſolicited on all ſides, ſtill excuſed herſelf from giving an anſwer, on account of her daughter's youth, and the reſolution ſhe had taken not to force her inclinations. Mean while ſhe was ſecretly alarmed at what her choice would be: My daughter, ſays ſhe, will prefer Verglan, and he is of all others the moſt likely to render his wife unhappy: if I declare my will to Emilia, though in the gentleſt terms, ſhe will make it a law to ſubmit to it without complaining; ſhe will marry a man whom ſhe does not love, and her thoughts will be continually employed on him whom ſhe does, when ſhe is condemned to the arms of another. I know her ſoul; ſhe will be the victim of her duty: but is it for me to ordain ſo cruel

cruel a ſacrifice? God forbid! No, I will let her own choice decide; but I can endeavour to enlighten that choice, and this is the only lawful uſe which I can make of the authority that heaven hath given me. I am certain as to her goodneſs of heart, and the juſtneſs of her underſtanding; if I can but ſupply, by my knowledge of the world, her inexperience, ſhe will then ſee with the eyes of her mother, and it is poſſible ſhe may incline to the ſame way of thinking.

Every time Verglan and Belzors met at Madam du Troene's, ſhe engaged them in diſcourſes on the manners, the cuſtoms, and maxims of the world; ſhe encouraged their diſputes, and without ſeeming to take either ſide; gave to both an opportunity of ſhewing their characters. The little adventures which entertained the idle curioſity of Paris

often furniſhed matter for their reflections. Verglan, light, tranſient, and lively, was conſtantly on the ſide of the the faſhion; Belzors never failed to defend the part of good manners with a a noble and modeſt freedom.

The behaviour of the Count d'Auberive and his wife once made the converſation at ſupper. The news was, that, after a violent quarrel and bitter complaints, on both ſides, of their mutual infidelity, they had concluded by laughing at the folly of being jealous, when they had ceaſed being amorous; and d'Auberive conſented to ſee the Chevalier de Clange, the lover of his wife; and ſhe, on her part, had promiſed to receive the Marchioneſs of Talbe, to whom d'Auberive paid his court, with all the good humour in the world: the agreement was ratified by a ſupper; and never

never did four lovers appear happier than they.

At this recital Verglan declared, that nothing was ever more reaſonable. They talk of good old times, ſays he, let them cite me an example among our fathers which can equal this: on the contrary, infidelity, at that time, raiſed a fire in a houſe that could never be quenched. If the huſband uſed the liberty which he had a right to, his grieved and faithful partner was obliged to devour her affliction, and groan in ſecret; or if ſhe imitated her roving ſpouſe, it was with the hazard not only of her lover's life but even her own; for they had the madneſs to attach the honour of the huſband to the virtue of his wife; and he became the object of publick ſcorn and ridicule for the firſt falſe ſtep of his lady. Upon my honour, I cannot con-

ceive how in thoſe barbarous ages they had the courage to marry: the tie of Hymen was then a chain indeed: but ſee the complaiſance and liberty which now reign in families; if the wedded pair love each other it is well; they live together and are happy; if they ceaſe to be lovers they become friends. This is what I call ſocial manners, and the only thing which can make marriage deſirable.

Nothing can be more pleaſant, ſaid Belzors, than this new method; but to taſte it with reliſh we muſt loſe all tenderneſs for our wives and children, and look with complacency on the man who diſhonours us. All thoſe ſcrupulous prejudices, replied Verglan, will give way when there is no longer ſhame annexed to them. When that ſhall be, returned Belzors, all the links of ſociety will be broken. Remember, my friend,

if

if there is no ſacred duty owing to the huſband, there will be none to the children, for the one is the only true ſource of the other. Houſhold quarrels were violent in the times of our fathers; but their maſs of manners were pure, and the wound quickly cloſed itſelf. But, my dear Verglan, we have now no longer any idea of thoſe pure and intimate joys which the fond and conſtant find in that union that makes the delight of their youth and the conſolation of their age.

Thou ſpeakeſt as an oracle, my wife Belzors, ſaid Verglan; but all this cannot convince me, that there is any merit in being conſtant when we have a mutual diſguſt to each other; on the contrary, I look upon it as the height of folly, and which nothing but the prejudice of education could make men ſubmit to.

I approve very much of the reſolution of this gentleman and lady to deſpiſe the cenſures of the world: for ſurely, if they are ſatisfied, no one elſe has a right to be diſpleaſed with their conduct.

As he ſpoke theſe words Count d'Auberive entered the room. Ah! Count, thou art come very opportunely, ſaid Verglan; tell us, I beſeech you, if the hiſtory we have heard be true: they ſay that you and your lady have agreed, for the future, to lay no reſtraint on each others pleaſures. It is true, ſaid d'Auberive careleſly; and have we not acted reaſonably? I have maintained that nothing could be more ſo, returned the other; but Belzors here condemns you without mercy. And why does he, replied the Count; would he not have done the ſame? My wife is young and handſome, which makes her a coquet; but

but I really believe ſhe is truly virtuous: however I expected blame from the jealous ones of my own ſex. But what aſtoniſhes me is that Belzors ſhould be the firſt, for 'till now I have received only commendations; nothing could be more natural than my procedure, yet all the world congratulates me, as if it was ſomething wonderful. They did not think (it ſeems) 'till now I had ſenſe enough to judge reaſonably: upon my honour I am confuſed at the compliments I receive. As to the gentlemen of ſevere manners, I honour them much; but I muſt beg leave to ſee for myſelf, and that life which is the happieſt will always appear to me the wiſeſt.

But how does the Counteſs like this change, demanded Madam du Troene? Extremely well, Madam, replied he: we ſupped together laſt night, and I never

never ſaw her in ſo good a humour. I will engage, ſaid Verglan, that you will return to her one day or other. Faith, that may well be, ſaid the Count; now when we ſit down to table, I am enchanted by the ſweetneſs of her converſation.

This firſt proof made a lively impreſſion on the mind of Emilia. Her mother peceived it, and left her to the free courſe of her own reflections; but the better to direct her in them, as ſoon as they were alone, ſhe teſtified her wonder at the different characters of theſe two young gentlemen. They have been both educated with equal care, ſays ſhe, and endowed with the ſame principles of honour and virtue; but yet they could not agree in their opinions, and each believes he has reaſon on his ſide.

Emilia

Emilia endeavoured to excuſe Verglan by inveighing againſt the manners of the age. With what lightneſs, ſays ſhe, do they treat faith and chaſtity! they make a jeſt of the moſt ſacred thing in nature; and Verglan (unfortunately) gives too much into this gay way of thinking.

Some time after this, Emilia and her mother being at a play, Belzors and Verglan preſented themſelves at their box. Madam du Troene invited them both to places. The play was Inès. The ſcene of the children made Verglan ſay ſome things which he deſigned for excellent criticiſms. Belzors without hearing them melted into tears. His rival was very pleaſant on his weakneſs: How, ſays he, can children then force you to weep? What, returned Belzors, could touch me, if helpleſs innocence, ſuch as theirs, did

did not? Yes, I confeſs I am moved; nor can I ever hear the tender names of father and mother without being ſenſibly affected.

After the play there was an entertainment called Nanine. As ſoon as they perceived the plot, Oh! ſays Verglan, this exceeds every thing; that Dolban ſhould make love to that little girl is not extraordinary, but that he ſhould marry her is a little too extravagant. It is perhaps a folly, replied Belzors; but it is one that I ſhould certainly commit, when I ſaw beauty and virtue united, as appears here.

None of their diſputes eſcaped Madam du Troene: Emilia, ſtill more attentive, bluſhed at the advantage Belzors had over his rival. Going from the play they paſſed by Chevalier d'Olcet, who was in

in deep mourning. What is the meaning of this, Chevalier, ſaid Verglan with a light air? An old uncle of mine, replied d'Olcet, has had the goodneſs to die, and leave me ten thouſand crowns a year. Ten thouſand crowns, cried Verglan! I give you joy; that uncle of yours was a gallant man: ten thouſand crowns! It is charming. Belzors ſaluted him in his turn; and, Chevalier, ſays he, I am afflicted at your loſs; I know you too well to imagine you capable of feeling an unnatural joy on this occaſion. He has long been a father to me, ſaid the Chevalier, confuſed at the laughing air he had taken; but you know he was very old. That is a motive for patience, replied Belzors with great ſweetneſs, but it is none of conſolation; a good parent is the beſt of all friends, and the greateſt fortune they can leave us will never make amends for the loſs of themſelves.

But

But ſurely, ſays Verglan, we ought all to live in our turn; the young would have cauſe enough to mourn if the old were immortal. Belzors turned to Verglan, and ſilenced him by a humiliating reply.

At each ſtroke of this contraſt the heart of Emilia was cruelly torn. Madam du Troene ſaw with joy the reſpectful and ſenſible air that Emilia aſſumed when ſpeaking to Belzors, and the diſſatisfaction and chagrin with which ſhe received the compliments of Verglan. But, in order to give a new proof, ſhe invited them both to ſupper. To divert the time while that was getting ready, they ſat down to play. Belzors and Verglan engaged at trictrac: the latter loved to play high, and Belzors agreed to what he pleaſed. Miſs du Troene was of the number of ſpectators; and her amiable

mother

mother kept her eyes fixed on her, that ſhe might read in her looks what paſſed in her heart.

Fortune favoured Belzors. Emilia (though ſhe was a little diſpleaſed with Verglan) could not help being concerned at ſeeing him ſo much on the loſing ſide; he was piqued at it to ſuch a degree, that he was no longer maſter of himſelf: he doubled his ſtakes, but ſtill continued to loſe, 'till ſupper put a ſtop to their play. He then endeavoured to put on good humour and gaiety, but his chagrined countenance betrayed him: the company ſeemed to pity him, and did not laugh at the many pleaſant things he attempted to ſay. In fine, he was completely humbled; nor could he have kept up the rules of good manners much longer if they had not quitted the table.

Belzors, whom neither the pleaſure or diſpleaſure of his rival could move, was, according to cuſtom, chearful, eaſy, and entertaining; they returned to play as ſoon as the cloth was removed: Madam Du Troene, not being engaged, amuſed herſelf with looking over the two rivals, the iſſue of whoſe play ſhe would have been very uneaſy about, if ſhe had not hoped it would have been a means of giving a right turn to the mind of Emilia; ſhe ſucceeded even beyond her expectations; Verglan loſt conſiderably; he vainly endeavoured to hide the trouble it gave him, his trembling hand and pale viſage declared it. Belzors, with unexhauſted complaiſance, gave him all the revenge he required; and when, by force of doubling his game, he had ſuffered his rival to acquit himſelf within a very ſmall ſum, if you pleaſe, ſays he, we will now leave off: I think I may honourably gain

gain what I would willingly have loſt: ſo much moderation and prudence raiſed in the company a murmur of applauſe: Verglan only appeared inſenſible; and ſaid with an air of diſdain, it would have been no pain to have played a little longer.

Emilia ſlept not that night, her whole ſoul was agitated by what ſhe had ſeen and heard; what a differrence is there between them, ſaid ſhe! what caprice can make me ſigh to be undeceived? Ought not the ſeduction to ceaſe when we perceive we are ſeduced? I admire the one, but love the other; how is this miſunderſtanding between my heart and my reaſon, which makes me ſtill cheriſh him whom I cannot eſteem? In the morning as uſual ſhe went to her mother's chamber: You do not ſeem to be well, ſaid Madam du Troene; No, Mamma, replied

replied ſhe, I am not at all ſo: Have you not ſlept well, returned the other; Very little, ſays ſhe with a ſigh. Her mother put on a gay countenance, that ſhe might diſſipate the uneaſineſs which appeared in the young lady's. You muſt dreſs yourſelf and look handſome to-day, ſays ſhe, for I intend you ſhall go with me to the Thuilleries this evening, where all Paris will be aſſembled; indeed it grieved me to ſee the fineſt garden in the univerſe neglected, and I am quite glad to ſee it reſorted to again.

At the uſual hour Verglan and Belzors attended them; and they ſet out on their walk. The eye is ſtruck with the thouſand dazzling beauties which ſurround us in theſe enchanting gardens. The ſculpture and decorations of the fountain are admirable; but what crowns all is the number of lovely young ladies,

who

who fill the garden walk, and attract the admiration of every beholder. Verglan knew them all, and could not help relating their hiſtories as they paſſed before him. That, ſaid he, is Fatme, than whom nothing can be more tender, nothing more ſenſible; ſhe lives like an angel with Cleon; he has given her twenty thouſand crowns in ſix months, and they love like turtles: that is the celebrated Corinna; her houſe is the temple of luxury, her ſuppers are the moſt elegant of all Paris, and ſhe does the honours with a grace which enchants us: do you ſee that modeſt fair one, and the languiſhing looks which, as ſhe walks, ſhe caſts on all ſides? ſhe has three lovers, each of whom ſhe flatters with being the only happy one: it is a pleaſure to ſee her in the midſt of her adorers, diſtributing her airy favours, and perſuading every one, in their turn, that ſhe prefers him to all

his rivals. She is a model of coquetry, continued he, and no perſon in the world deceives with ſo much eaſe and addreſs; ſhe has a high opinion of what I ſay, and I have often told her what I now tell you. Are you in her confidence then, demanded Madam du Troene? Oh! yes, replied Verglan, it is with me only that ſhe does not diſſemble; ſhe knows ſhe cannot impoſe on me. And are you, Belzors, ſaid Madam du Troene, initiated into theſe myſteries? No, Madam, I believe it may be very amuſing, but I fear a little dangerous.

Madam du Troene obſerved, that the modeſt ladies received the laughing familiar bow of Verglan in a cold reſerved manner; but returned, with an air of friendſhip and eſteem, the reſpectful ſalute of Belzors. She rallied Verglan on this diſtinction with a deſign that Emilia might

might take notice of it. It is true, Madam, ſaid he, they ſeem to treat me with rigour in publick, but in private they make me ſufficient amends.

At their return home the ladies received a viſit from Leonora, a young widow of uncommon beauty: ſhe ſpoke of the misfortune ſhe had ſuſtained in the loſs of a valuable huſband with ſuch grace, candour, and ſenſibility, that Madam du Troene, Emilia, and Belzors, heard her with tears in their eyes. For a handſome young lady, ſaid Verglan, in a tone of raillery, a huſband is a ſlight loſs, and eaſily repaired. Not for me, Sir, ſaid the tender and modeſt Leonora; a huſband who could honour a woman of my age with his eſteem and confidence, and whoſe delicate tenderneſs had never either the fears of jealouſy or negligence of habit; ſuch a one is

not eaſily replaced. He was, without doubt, a handſome man, demanded Verglan? No, Sir; but his ſoul was beautiful. a beautiful ſoul! cried Verglan with a diſdainful air; a beautiful ſoul! he was young I preſume. Not at all ſo; he was at an age when underſtanding is more expected than a fine perſon. But if he was neither young nor handſome, I can't ſee what you have loſt. Eſteem and love, cried ſhe; that tender, generous friendſhip, which alone is capable of fixing the heart. Nothing of all this can fail you, ſaid Verglan; believe me, Madam, the eſſential point is to ſuit yourſelf agreeably to your age and perſon, to unite the graces with the loves, in fine, to marry a handſome man who will guard your liberty. Your counſels are extremely gallant, ſaid Leonora as ſhe was taking her leave; but they have the misfortune to be ill placed.

This

This is a fine prude, ſaid Verglan when ſhe was gone! Prudery, Sir, replied Madam du Troene, is an exaggerated copy of wiſdom and reaſon; but I muſt ſay I never in my life ſaw any thing in Leonora but what was quite unaffected. For my part, ſaid Belzors, I have ever thought her as much to be admired for her virtue as her beauty. Do you know, interrupted Madam du Troene, what I think might conſole this lady for her loſs? It is ſuch a man as Belzors; and was he to conſult me as a friend in his choice, I would perſuade him to make his court to her. You honour me very much, Madam, ſaid he; but Leonora merits a free heart, and by misfortune mine is not ſo. Saying theſe words he took his leave, much mortified at the advice he had received. Certainly, ſays he, ſhe would never invite me to court Leonora, but to avoid

plainly telling me I muſt renounce Emilia: ah, how little does ſhe know my heart!

Verglan, when his rival was gone, ſeemed to pity him: he ſpoke of him, as being a man of the ſtricteſt honour, at the ſame time intimating that alone was not ſufficient to make a man amiable. Madam du Troene, without explaining herſelf, aſſured him ſhe had no deſign of ſaying any thing to diſoblige a gentleman whom ſhe revered more than any other of her acquaintance. During this time Emilia caſt down her eyes, and bluſhed in ſuch a manner as ſhewed the agitation of her ſoul. Verglan doubted not but it was cauſed by joy, and retired triumphing at the conqueſt he had made.

The next day he ſent her a letter to this effect:

"YOU muſt think me very ro-
"mantick, charming Emilia! to have
"been ſo long in coming to an expla-
"nation: but accuſe me not of an un-
"juſt diffidence; I have read in your
"eyes the ſentiments of your heart, and
"if I had conſulted only that, I ſhould
"not have doubted a favourable anſwer.
"But you depend on a mother, and
"mothers are often capricious: hap-
"pily for us, yours loves you, and has
"tenderly made your choice her own.
"The genteel refuſal ſhe has given
"Belzors ſhews that ſhe has decided;
"but your conſent ought to precede
"hers, and for that I wait with the
"impatience of the moſt tender and
"moſt ardent love."

Emilia opened this letter before ſhe knew from whom it came; and when ſhe had read the contents was more offended than ſurpriſed, and heſitated not to communicate it to her mother. I know your goodneſs, ſays ſhe, and am obliged to you for this mark of your friendſhip; but your confidence deſerves mine in return: Belzors has written to me; read this letter. Emilia obey'd, and read as follows:

"Madam, I honour virtue and admire "beauty: I render to Leonora what is "due to her merit. But has heaven been "only favourable to her? After having "adored in your image what to me ap-"peared moſt deſirable in life, can you "believe me capable of following the "advice you have given? I will not "ſay it was cruel; my reſpect ſtops "my complaints: but if I am never to

"call

"call your daughter mine, at leaſt I will "preſerve the moſt tender ſentiments "for her, ſuch as are not to be ef-"faced."

Emilia could not read theſe laſt words without the moſt lively emotion: her mother, not ſeeming to perceive it, ſaid to her, It is I, my daughter, who am to anſwer theſe two rivals, but it is you muſt dictate my anſwers: Me! alas, Madam! ſaid Emilia, confuſed. Who ſhould but you! returned her mother; Is it me whom they demand in marriage? Is it my heart that ſhould be conſulted? Ah! Madam, ought not your will to be mine? Have not you a right to diſpoſe of me? All this, my child, is very fine; but as it is your happineſs or miſery which is to be the conſequence, it is but juſt that you ſhould decide it: theſe young gentle-

men

men are both handſome, their birth and fortunes are equal; but him of the two who beſt anſwers the idea you have conceived of a good huſband, this will we prefer and diſcharge the other.

Emilia, ſenſibly touched with this behaviour, (ſo uncommon in parents) kiſſed her mother's hands, and bathed them with her tears: add ſtill a little more, ſays ſhe, to this great generoſity, by chooſing for me; the more important it is, the more reaſon is there that you ſhould determine it: the huſband which my mother ſhall chooſe will be dear, my heart can ſafely promiſe you that. No, my daughter, you deceive yourſelf, no one ever yet loved, merely becauſe it was their duty, all other laws in the marriage ſtate may be complied with, but love alone is free and not to be in-

fluenced

fluenced by human inſtitutions. Think, oh my child, how dreadful it is for duty and inclination to pull different ways; and while it is in your power make choice of him you think moſt likely to render you happy: If, after all, you find yourſelf deceived, I will endeavour to comfort you, I will be partaker of your cares, but I will never be the author of them. I am going to write, to whom ſhall it be?

Imagine the trouble, the confuſion of Emilia, trembling before this tender mother, one hand on her eyes, the other on her heart; ſhe eſſayed in vain to ſpeak; her voice expired on her lips. Well, reſumed her mother, to whom ſhall we write, tell me, for I grow impatient? To Verglan, ſaid Emilia with a feeble and tremulous voice. To

Verglan

Verglan be it then; what ſhall I ſay? Emilia dictated;

"IT is not proper, Sir, that a man "who owes himſelf, as you do, to "ſociety, ſhould renounce it to live in a "domeſtick way; my Emilia thinks "ſhe can never make you amends for "ſuch a ſacrifice, and deſires you will "continue to embelliſh the world; it is "for that you are made."

Is that all? ſaid Madam du Troene; Yes, Madam, returned Emilia. And to Belzors, What ſhall we ſay to him? Emilia continued to dictate with a little more confidence;

"YOU ſhew yourſelf worthy of a "lady, amiable both in perſon and "mind; but why do you forbid a "choice,

"choice, which intereſts as much as it "honours me, at the ſame time that you "ſeem to wiſh I would encourage it? "Your too great modeſty makes you "unjuſt to yourſelf and me: learn better "how to judge of the intentions of an "indulgent mother; I diſpoſe of my "daughter's heart, and we concur "in our ſentiments of eſteeming you "more than any other perſon in the "world."

Come to my arms, my child, cried Madam du Troene, that I may embrace you; you fill the wiſhes of your mother, and have ſpoken the dictates of my heart.

Belzors delayed not the completion of his wiſhes: and never was marriage more applauded, or more fortunate, than theirs. The tenderneſs of Belzors was

was divided between Emilia and her mother, and it was a doubt in the world, which he loved beſt of the two.

END of the FIRST TALE.

THE

THE

Shepherdeſs of the *Alps*.

TALE II.

IN the mountains of Savoy, near the road between Briſancon and Modena, lies a ſolitary valley; the appearance of which ſtrikes the traveller with a pleaſing melancholy. Three hills form an amphitheatre, through which are interſperſed the cottages of ſhepherds. Natural caſcades, promiſcuous plantations of flowers and trees, and a continual verdure, combine in ornamenting this charming ſpot.

It was here that the Marquis of Fonroſe in returning from France to Italy with his lady, broke the axle-tree of his carriage; and

and the day being far advanced, they were compelled to ſeek in this valley a habitation for the night. As they walked towards the cottages they ſaw a flock take the ſame road, conducted by a ſhepherdeſs whoſe gait aſtoniſhed them. They approached nearer, and heard her in the moſt affecting and plaintive accents utter theſe words: "The ſun is "now going to reſt himſelf after his la- "bour; it is thus, at the cloſe of a "painful life, the exhauſted ſoul reunites "itſelf to the pure ſource of its immor- "tality: but, alas! how diſtant is that "time, and how long is life!" Saying theſe words ſhe turned into another path, and walked from them with an air, which, though quite negligent, was full of majeſty and grace.

The Marquis and his Lady, ſtruck with what they had ſeen, and ſtill more with

with what they had heard, doubled their ſpeed to overtake this ſhepherdeſs, whom they admired; but what was their ſurprize, when under the plaineſt dreſs, the humbleſt veſtments, they ſaw all the graces, all the beauties united.

My pretty maid, ſaid the Marchioneſs, ſeeing ſhe endeavoured to avoid them, fear nothing; we are travellers, whom accident obliges to ſeek in this village a lodging for a night; will you be our guide? I am ſorry, Madam, ſaid the ſhepherdeſs, caſting down her eyes and bluſhing, that you are put to this hardſhip; for theſe cottages are the habitations of the poor, and you will be badly lodged. You lodge there yourſelf, without doubt, replied the Marchioneſs, and I can very well ſupport for a night, the inconveniencies which you ſuffer always. I am formed for it, ſaid the

ſhepherdeſs with a charming modeſty. No, certainly, ſaid the Marquis, who could no longer diſſemble the emotion which ſhe cauſed within him; No, you are not formed to ſuffer, and fortune has been unjuſt; Is it poſſible, lovely creature, that ſo many charms ſhould be concealed in this deſart, under this habit? Fortune, Sir, replied Adelaide, (for that was the name of the ſhepherdeſs) is not cruel when we can enjoy what ſhe beſtows on us; my ſtate has pleaſures which are unknown in any other, and uſe makes that agreeable to us, which to you would be inſupportable. That may be, ſaid the Marquis, with thoſe whom heaven has ſent into the world in this obſcure condition; but you, wonderful girl, you whom I admire, you who enchant me, was never born what you are now; your air, your look, your voice, your language, all betray you; every

every word that you have ſpoken ſhews a cultivated underſtanding, and a noble way of thinking; tell us by what ſtrange misfortune you are reduced to this low ſituation. For a man that is unfortunate, replied Adelaide, there are a thouſand ways by which he may make himſelf otherwiſe; but for a woman there is no honeſt reſource but ſervitude, happy are they who ſerve good people; if you will go and ſee thoſe I belong to, you will be charmed with the innocence of their lives, the candour, ſimplicity, and honeſty, of their manners.

In a ſhort time they arrived at the cottage, which was ſeparated by a partition from the fold where the unknown drove in her ſheep, counting them with the moſt ſerious attention. An old man and woman (ſuch as they paint Philemon and Baucis) came to receive them with

that ruſtick freedom which ſeemed to recal the golden age: We have nothing to offer you, ſaid the good woman, better than clean ſtraw for a bed, and milk, fruit, and barley bread, for nouriſhment; but the little which heaven has given us we will ſhare with you, with all our hearts.

Our travellers in entering the cottage were ſurprized at the order in which every thing was placed; the table, conſiſting of only one plank of walnut tree, was of a ſhining brown, on which were placed flowered earthen veſſels deſigned for milk, and every thing preſented the image of contented poverty, by the ſatisfaction they expreſſed in the enjoyment of the neceſſaries of life.

It is our dear daughter, ſaid the old woman, who takes care of the houſe.

In

In the morning, before ſhe drives her flock into the fields, and indeed as ſoon as the day dawns, ſhe cleans and places every thing in the moſt decent order, ſo as to leave me no trouble. What! ſaid the Marchioneſs, is this ſhepherdeſs your daughter? Ah! Madam, replied ſhe, I would to heaven ſhe was! but it is my heart only which gives her that name; for though I feel the love of a mother for her, yet I am not ſo happy as to have borne her: alas! I was not worthy to bring ſuch a girl into the world. Who is ſhe then? from whence did ſhe come? and what misfortune has reduced her to this condition? All that is unknown to us, replied the dame. It is four years ſince ſhe came hither, dreſſed like a country girl, and offered her ſervice to look after our flocks. We made no ſcruple of taking her, and indeed would willingly have maintained her for

nothing; ſo much did her good looks and ſweet behaviour gain upon us. We were curious to know her birth; but our queſtions afflicting her, we thought it beſt to deſiſt. Our reſpect ſtill encreaſes the longer we know her; but the more we endeavour to ſet her above ourſelves, the more ſhe humbles herſelf to us. Never had daughter more tenderneſs for her real parents than ſhe for us. It is true ſhe cannot obey us, becauſe we never command; but it ſeems as if ſhe could divine; ſhe anticipates all our wiſhes. Indeed I can look on her as no other than an angel ſent to comfort our old age.

And does ſhe really do all your out-door buſineſs, demanded the Marchioneſs? Yes, madam: ſhe gives freſh ſtraw to the ſheep, ſhe milks the goats and cows, and it ſeems as if her hand gave new

new ſweetneſs to the milk; for when I go to ſell it in the town, I never have enough for my cuſtomers, they find it ſo delicious. This dear child is never idle, for ſhe employs her leiſure in works of ſtraw and twigs, which every body admires. I wiſh you was to ſee how prettily ſhe plaits them together: every thing becomes precious under her fingers. You ſee, Madam, we appear to live an eaſy and tranquil life: it is ſhe who procures it us; it is this heavenly girl who renders us happy. Is ſhe ſo herſelf, demanded the Marquis? She endeavours to perſuade us that ſhe is, replied the old man; but I have often obſerved to my wife, that in returning from the fields in an evening, ſhe has had her eyes full of tears, and a countenance the moſt afflicted in the world. When ſhe ſees us ſhe affects to ſmile; but we can plainly perceive that there is ſome grief

which conſumes her, though we dare not enquire the cauſe. Ah! Madam, rejoined the old woman, what pity is it that this girl ſhould be ſo obſtinate as to attend the flock in ſpite of rain and ſnow! A hundred times have I been on my knees to beg ſhe would let me take her place, but my prayers have been in vain. She riſes with the ſun; ſhe goes out, and returns in the evening ſtiff with cold. Judge, ſays ſhe to me with tenderneſs, if I would let you quit your fire, and expoſe your age to the rigours of the ſeaſon, when I can hardly bear it myſelf. At the ſame time ſhe carries under her arms the wood that warms us; and if I complain of the fatigue ſhe gives herſelf, let me alone, my good mother, ſays ſhe; it is by exerciſe that I preſerve myſelf from cold; labour is proper for my age. In fine, Madam, ſhe is ſo good and ſo charming, that my huſband and

I never ſpeak of her without tears in our eyes.

But ſuppoſe ſhe ſhould leave you, demanded the Marchioneſs? We would not willingly loſe her for the whole world, interrupted the old man; but, if ſhe was to become more happy by it, we ſhould find conſolation in that, and die content. Alas, yes! replied the old woman, burſting into tears. I wiſh to heaven ſhe had a fortune more worthy of her! I did indeed hope that her dear hand might cloſe my eyes; but I love her more than myſelf.

Here the arrival of Adelaide interrupted their diſcourſe. She appeared with a diſh of milk in one hand, and in the other a baſket of fruit; and after having ſaluted them with an enchanting grace, ſhe began to prepare for ſupper.

You

You give yourſelf a great deal of trouble, my dear child, ſaid the Marchioneſs to her. I endeavour, Madam, replied ſhe, to fulfill the intentions of my maſter and miſtreſs, who deſire to receive you in the beſt manner they are able. You will make (continued ſhe, ſpreading a cloth on the table, which, though coarſe, was extremely white) a frugal and ruſtic meal. This bread is not the whiteſt in the world, but it is well-taſted: theſe eggs are freſh, the milk is good, and the fruit ſuch as the ſeaſon yields.

The diligence, the attention, the noble and decent grace with which this wonderful ſhepherdeſs performed all the duties of hoſpitality, the reſpect ſhe paid the old folks every time they ſpoke to her, and the attention with which ſhe watched their eyes to know what they would

would have done, filled the Marquis and his lady with aſtoniſhment and admiration; from the moment they retired they talked of nothing elſe, and agreed, that in order to clear up this myſtery, they ſhould take the laſs away with them.

At break of day one of their ſervants, who had paſſed the night in repairing the damage done to their carriage, came to let them know it was ready. The Marchioneſs called for the ſhepherdeſs, and addreſſed her as follows: Without deſiring to penetrate into the ſecret of your birth, and the cauſe of your unhappineſs, I find myſelf greatly intereſted in your favour; I ſee your fortitude raiſes you above misfortune, and that you can accommodate your mind to your preſent condition. At the ſame time that I admire your virtue, I muſt think that condition

condition unworthy of you; I can, amiable unknown, give you a better fate, the intentions of my Lord agree perfectly with mine: I have at Turin a conſiderable eſtate, but I want a friend, and I believe I ſhall be poſſeſſed of an ineſtimable treaſure if I can make one of you; if you will live with me, think of this propoſal, and take from it I beſeech you all idea of ſervitude; I do not believe you was born in that ſtate; but if I am deceived, I had rather raiſe you above your birth than let you continue in it: I repeat it to you, It is a friend that I want: be not concerned on account of theſe good people; they ſhall be no loſers by your quitting them, at leaſt they ſhall have wherewithal to paſs the remainder of their days in eaſe and comfort, and it is from your hands they ſhall receive thoſe benefits.

The

The old people, who were preſent at the diſcourſe, threw themſelves at the feet of the Marchioneſs, and kiſſed her hands; they conjured the young ſhepherdeſs to accept of theſe generous offers, repreſenting to her, with tears in their eyes, that they were on the brink of the grave, and at their death ſhould leave her in a ſtate of total ſolitude, in which ſhe could neither be happy nor ſafe. The ſhepherdeſs embracing them, mingled her tears with theirs; ſhe rendered thanks to the bounteous Marquis and Marchioneſs with a ſenſibility that added to her charms. Though I cannot, ſays ſhe, accept of your bounty, becauſe heaven has marked this for my place of reſidence, and the will of heaven muſt be accompliſhed; yet your goodneſs is graven on my heart in characters which can never be effaced: the reſpected name of Fonroſe will be ever preſent in my

my mind; and let me, ſays ſhe, bluſhing and caſting down her eyes, beg one favour more of thoſe who do honour to that name; it is to bury this adventure in eternal ſilence, and leave the world ignorant of the fate of an unfortunate girl, who wiſhes to live and die in obſcurity.

The Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe heard her with grief and amazement, and repeated their requeſts, but ſhe was immoveable; and they at length parted, not without tears on both ſides. The travellers during the reſt of their journey could talk of nothing but this romantick affair, they could ſcarcely believe it real; their imaginations were ſtill full of it when they arrived at Turin. They doubted not but the ſhepherdeſs muſt have ſome great reaſon for ſo ſtrongly enjoining them ſecrecy,

and

and what this reaſon was, furniſhed an inexhauſtible ſource for reflection and conjecture.

A ſon of the Marquis's, who was generally preſent at theſe diſcourſes, loſt not a circumſtance. He was at that age when the imagination is the moſt ſuſceptible of tender impreſſions. All that he heard recounted of the charms, the virtues and the misfortunes of the ſhepherdeſs of Savoy, raiſed in his ſoul the moſt ardent deſire to ſee her. He brought her image continually before him, and compared it with all he had ever ſeen, and found they all fell infinitely ſhort of the idea he had conceived of her. The city of Turin grew odious to him; his thoughts were inceſſantly employed on that valley which concealed from the world one of its greateſt ornaments. At the ſame time he carefully hid what paſſed in his mind

mind from his friends, fearing they ſhould prevent his wiſhes. They will never, ſays he, conſent to my taking a journey to ſee her; and ſhe herſelf, was ſhe apprized of my deſign, would be frighted at my purſuit, and would not fail to hide herſelf from me.

In theſe reflections he ſpent his time for about three months, when at length he took a reſolution to quit all for her, and to go diſguiſed like a ſhepherd to ſeek her in her ſolitude. He ſuddenly diſappeared: his parents were filled with ſurpriſe and inquietude, which every day increaſed. They ſearched for him, but in vain; they were filled with deſpair. A quarrel, an aſſaſſination, every thing that was dreadful, preſented itſelf to their fancy: and theſe unfortunate parents wept, without ceaſing, for the loſs of their ſon, their only hope.

Mean

Mean while Fonroſe, under the habit of a ſhepherd, offered his ſervice to the villagers whoſe ſheep fed in the valley. His ambition was filled; they committed a flock to his care.

At firſt he let them guide him, hoping they might ſtray where the ſhepherdeſs kept hers. If, ſays he, this beautiful recluſe is unhappy, her heart will find ſome relief in a friend, if I can prove myſelf one: or if it is only a taſte for an innocent and tranquil life which keeps her here, ſhe muſt ſometimes feel uneaſy moments, in which ſhe would be glad of ſociety to amuſe her. If I could then render mine agreeable to her, we ſhould in time become friends; for ſurely in this place we only are fitted for the converſation of each other; and acquaintance is not very diſtant from friendſhip, and friendſhip is ſtill nearer to love.

One day as he was indulging himſelf in theſe thoughts, his eyes at the ſame time wandering acroſs the country, he heard, not far from him, the voice of her whoſe charms had been ſo much commended. It is here, ſaid the ſhepherdeſs in the moſt plaintive tone, it is here that I taſte the only pleaſure which this world has for me! my grief and ſettled melancholy I prefer to all the deceitful joys of life!

Theſe accents wounded the tender heart of Fonroſe. What can, ſays he, be the cauſe of this grief which conſumes her? ah, how deſirable it would be to give her comfort! A hope ſtill more ſweet flattered his wiſhes. He feared to alarm the ſhepherdeſs by imprudently indulging his impatience of ſeeing her, and for the firſt time was ſatisfied with hearing only.

The next day he returned to the meadow, and placed himſelf at the foot of a rock, from whence on the day before he had heard that melodious voice. I muſt not forget to tell my reader, that Fonroſe to the fineſt perſon in the world joined thoſe talents which ſo much diſtinguiſh the young nobility of Italy. He played on the flute like Beſuzzi himſelf, from whom he had received his leſſons.

Adelaide was now reſting her flock on one ſide of the mountain, not far from the ſhepherd. She was ſo deeply ſunk in affliction, that ſhe did not even give it vent by words. The wind and every thing was ſtill; when on a ſudden this profound ſilence was interrupted by plaintive notes from the flute of Fonroſe. Theſe uncommon ſounds excited in the ſoul of Adelaide a ſurpriſe mingled with

trouble. She had never before heard any from the ſhepherds but the moſt ruſtick muſick. She ſtood fixed in attention, looking round to ſee who it was that made ſuch ſweet harmony; and perceived a young ſhepherd ſitting in a cavity of the rock, at the foot of which his flock was feeding. She walked nearer the better to hear him. Here, ſays ſhe, is an inſtance of what nature unaſſiſted can arrive at. Had this ſhepherd been taught by the greateſt artiſt could he have exceeded what he does now? What delicacy in the turns! what variety in the notes! Can it be ſaid that taſte is not a natural gift?

Since the time Adelaide had lived in ſolitude, this was the firſt time that her grief had been ſuſpended by any pleaſing emotion, and ſhe indulged it without reſtraint. Fonroſe, who ſaw her approach without

without ſeeming to have done ſo, was ſitting at the foot of a willow tree; he ſeized the moment of her retreat, and led his flock ſo as to meet her on the brow of the hill; he looked once at her, and continued his road as if buſied only with the care of his ſheep, but that ſlight view was ſufficient to fill him with admiration: What eyes! What a mouth! What fine features! How lovely, though obſcured by that fixed gloom which was ſpread on her countenance! It was plain that grief alone had faded the roſes in her cheeks, but that which ſtruck him moſt of all her charms was the noble elegance of her gait, the eaſe of her movements; ſhe ſeemed like a young cedar, whoſe tender ſtem yielded to the ſoft breeze of the zephyrs. My parents have not done her juſtice, ſays he; they have too faintly deſcribed this unknown beauty, who merits the adora-

tion of the world; and is it in this deſart that ſhe lives! ſhe who is worthy to have kings at her feet, is employed in the care of a flock of ſheep: under what veſtments does ſhe appear! yet ſhe adorns every thing, and nothing disfigures her: but what a life is this for ſo delicate a frame! the coarſeſt food, a ſavage climate, and a bed of ſtraw; Great God! Yes, I will draw her from this too-wretched-ſtate, ſo unworthy of her.

Theſe were his reflections the reſt of the evening, until ſleep put an end to them, only to preſent him with her image. Adelaide, on her ſide, was ſenſibly ſtruck with the youth and beauty of Fonroſe, and could not help admiring the caprice of fortune: How nature, ſays ſhe, has adorned him with every grace! but alas! in the ſtate he is, theſe gifts

gifts are entirely uſeleſs, and would, perhaps, in a more exalted one be a misfortune: What evils does not beauty cauſe in the world! fatal gift! Who would wiſh to be poſſeſſed of thee? Theſe reflections embittered all the pleaſure ſhe had taſted; ſhe reproached herſelf with having been ſenſible of it, and reſolved for the future not to admit it.

The next day Fonroſe thought ſhe ſeemed to avoid him, and was filled with concern: Does ſhe, ſays he, pereeive my diſguiſe? Have I betrayed myſelf? Theſe unquiet thoughts took him up the whole day; and his flute was neglected. Adelaide was not ſo diſtant but ſhe could very well have heard him, and his ſilence aſtoniſhed her: ſhe began herſelf to ſing one of her own

plaintive compoſitions, the words of which were theſe:

All nature ſeems to ſhare my pains;
The birds on ev'ry tree
With tender notes, and plaintive ſtrains,
In concert join with me.

Fond echo to my ſong replies,
For me ſhe kindly grieves;
The zephyrs imitate my ſighs,
As ruſt'ling through the leaves.

The murm'ring brook, through flow'ry vales,
The mournful theme purſues,
With me it weeps, my woe bewails,
Which ev'ry day renews.

Fonroſe heard her, and could not help joining with his flute. Never was a concert

concert more affecting than that of Fonroſe and Adelaide: Oh, heavens! ſays ſhe, with aſtoniſhment, I dare not believe my ſenſes! It is not a ſhepherd but a God which I hear! could the natural notion of harmony inſpire theſe concords! As ſhe ſpoke theſe words a rural melody, or rather a celeſtial one, made the valley reſound; Adelaide thought ſhe ſaw realiſed all the wonders that poeſie attributes to her charming ſiſter: Confuſed and ſpeechleſs, ſhe knew not whether ſhe ought to fly from, or deliver herſelf to, this enchantment. As ſhe was in this dilemma, ſhe perceived the ſhepherd aſſembling his flock to return home.

He is ignorant, ſays ſhe, of what delight he gives his hearers; his mind is too ſimple to be vain. Great indeed is the power of muſick, it is the only talent which

which can be enjoyed alone, all others require witneſſes. This was the gift of heaven to man in the ſtate of innocence, it is the pureſt of all pleaſures; alas! it is the only one that I am now capable of taſting, and I look upon this ſhepherd as a new echo who is come to repeat my grief.

The following days Fonroſe affected to keep at a diſtance in his turn: Adelaide was afflicted at it: Fate, ſays ſhe, ſeems to envy me this feeble conſolation; I delivered myſelf too eaſily to it, and for my puniſhment I am deprived of it. One day it happened that they met on the brow of the hill, Adelaide could not reſiſt her deſire of ſpeaking; ſhepherd, ſays ſhe, do you keep your flock at any great diſtance from hence? I do not know, ſays he; for it is not I who conduct my flock, but they conduct me; they

they know theſe places much better than I do, and I leave it to them to chuſe the beſt paſture. You are a ſtranger then, replied the ſhepherdeſs: Pray from whence came you? I was born on the other ſide of the Alps, anſwered Fonroſe, Was you born among the ſhepherds, purſued ſhe? Since I am one myſelf, returned he, caſting down his eyes, you ſurely muſt believe I was born among them. Yet that is what I much doubt, replied Adelaide, obſerving him with attention: your talents, your language, your air, all convince me that you was born to a better fate.

You are very good, anſwered Fonroſe; but why would you believe nature has denied every thing to ſhepherds; is it becauſe you was born a queen? Adelaide bluſhed at this reply, and anſwered haſtily; The other day, ſaid ſhe, your

your flute accompanied my ſong with a tone which would have been ſurprizing in a ſimple keeper of ſheep. Your voice would not have been leſs ſo to me, replied Fonroſe, in a ſimple ſhepherdeſs. but had you never any inſtructions, purſued ſhe? Only as you have, returned he, the guide of my heart and my ear: you ſung, I heard you, that which my heart felt my flute explained, I breathed my ſoul into it, this is the whole ſecret; nothing can be more eaſy. That is incredible, ſaid Adelaide. I ſaid the ſame when I heard you, replied Fonroſe; nevertheleſs we muſt believe it: Do you think nature and love do not ſometimes unite the moſt valuable qualities with the moſt humble fortune, to ſhew that riches alone will not enoble us?

While they diſcourſed thus they advanced into the valley; and Fonroſe, animated

animated by a ray of hope, began to ſing a ſprightly air; but Adelaide interrupted him. Ah! in pity, ſays ſhe, ſpare my ſoul the image of a ſentiment which it can never feel: this ſolitude is ſacred to grief, her echoes are unaccuſtomed to repeat the profane ſounds of joy; here every thing mourns with me. I have enough to complain of as well as you, replied the young ſhepherd; and theſe words, pronounced with a deep ſigh, were followed by a long ſilence; until Adelaide firſt broke it: You have enough to complain of you ſay, reſumed ſhe; Is it of men, or is it of fate? I do not know, ſaid he, but I am far from being happy; pray enquire no farther into the cauſe.

Hear me, ſaid Adelaide: Heaven has certainly brought us together to be a comfort to each other; the ſecret griefs with

which my heart is oppreſſed are too heavy for me, I ſink beneath the weight of them. If you know what it is to be unhappy you ought to be compaſſionate, and therefore fit for my confidence; but promiſe me it ſhall be mutual.

Alas! ſaid Fonroſe, my evils are of ſuch a nature, I ſhall perhaps be condemned never to reveal them. This myſterious anſwer only redoubled the curioſity of Adelaide. Come to-morrow, ſays ſhe, to the foot of this hill, under this old buſhy oak, where you have heard me ſigh, here will I tell you things which will excite your pity.

Fonroſe paſſed the night in a dreadful agitation: his fate depended on what he was to hear: a thouſand frightful ideas employed his mind; but what he dreaded moſt was, to be made the confidant

of

of an unfortunate and faithful amour. If ſhe loves, ſays he, I am loſt.

The next day as ſoon as he arrived at the appointed place he ſaw Adelaide coming towards it. The ſun was obſcured by clouds; and the gloom of the morning agreed well with the ſubject of their converſation.

When they were ſeated at the foot of the oak, Adelaide ſpoke thus: You ſee theſe ſtones which the graſs begins to cover, they are the tomb of the moſt tender, the moſt virtuous of men, whom my love and imprudence deprived of life. I am of a diſtinguiſhed family in France: the Count d'Oreſtan conceived for me the moſt tender paſſion, I was ſenſible of it, I was ſo to an exceſs; my parents oppoſed it, and my love, increaſed by that oppoſition, made me

conſent

conſent to a marriage ſacred to virtuous ſouls, but diſallowed by the laws. Italy was then the theatre of war: my lord was ordered to join the corps of which he was commander; I went with him to Briſancon, where my fooliſh tenderneſs detained him two days beyond his time. This young nobleman, full of honour, put off his journey with extream reluctance; he ſacrificed his duty to me, but what had I to ſacrifice to him but myſelf? At length he reſiſted my tears, and tore himſelf from me when it was too late; I accompanied him to this valley, where I received his laſt adieu, and returned to Briſancon, there to wait 'till I heard from him. A few days after news arrived of a battle; I feared for d'Oreſtan; I wiſhed for his glory, but feared for his ſafety; when I received a letter to this effect: I ſhall be ſuch a day, and ſuch an hour, in the valley

and

and under the oak where we parted; I ſhall be there alone, and beg that you would be ſo too; I ſtill live only for you. How great was my miſtake! I perceived in this letter only an impatience to ſee me; I applauded that impatience; I was punctual to the appointment. D'Oreſtan appeared, and after the moſt tender ſalute, I have obliged you, my dear Adelaide, ſaid he, and in doing ſo have failed in my duty to my country, when that duty was of more importance than my life: what I feared has happened; a battle has been fought; my regiment charged, performed prodigies of valour, and I was not there; I am diſhonoured, loſt without reſource; I will not reproach you with my misfortune, I have but one ſacrifice to make you, and I ſhall then have finiſhed.

At this diſcourſe, pale, trembling, and panting for breath, I caught my huſband in my arms; at the ſame time I felt my blood freeze in my veins, my knees bent under me, and I fell without motion; he took advantage of my ſwoon to tear himſelf from me, and I was ſoon recalled to life by the noiſe of the piſtol which gave him his death: I will not endeavour to paint my ſituation, it is not to be deſcribed; and theſe tears which you ſee me ſhed, theſe ſighs which ſtifle my voice, can give you no idea of the anguiſh of my ſoul.

After having paſſed a whole night ſighing over the corpſe in ſtupid grief, my firſt care was to bury with it my ſhame; my own hands dug his grave; I do not endeavour to move your pity by what I ſay; but the moment in which the earth ſeparated me from the ſad remains

mains of my huſband, was a thouſand times more terrible than that can be which will part my ſoul from my body: exhauſted by grief and want of nouriſhment, my weak hands employed two days in digging this grave with inconceivable pains, when my ſtrength failed me I repoſed myſelf on the livid cold breaſt of my huſband: in fine, I rendered him the duties of burial, and my heart promiſed to wait in this place for the time when we ſhould be reunited. Mean while cruel hunger began to devour me; I thought it a crime to refuſe nature the maintenance of a life much more grievous than death. I changed my dreſs for the ſimple habit of a ſhepherdeſs, and embraced this ſtate as my only refuge; ſince that time all my conſolation has been to weep over this grave, which ſhall be my own. You ſee, purſued ſhe, with what ſincerity

I have opened my ſoul to you. I can with you, undiſguiſed, weep in freedom, it is a ſolace I have need of. But I wait for the ſame confidence from you: think not that I will ever abuſe it. I ſee clearly that the ſtate of a ſhepherd is more new and ſtrange to you than to me. You are young, perhaps ſenſible; and if I may truſt my conjectures, our evils have the ſame ſource, and, like me, you have loved; if ſo, we ſhall be the more inclined to pity each other. I look upon you as a friend whom heaven, touched by my misfortunes, has kindly ſent me in my ſolitude: look upon me as one capable of giving, if not the beſt councils, at leaſt a conſoling example.

You affect me ſenſibly, ſaid Fonroſe, overwhelmed with what he had heard; nor can you conceive the impreſſion the recital

recital of your misfortunes has made upon me. Alas! it is out of my power to return that confidence which you have teſtified to me, and of which you are ſo worthy: but ſuch is the nature of my ſufferings, that an eternal ſilence muſt bury them in the depth of my heart. You are very unhappy, continued he with a deep ſigh: I am ſtill more ſo. That is all I can tell you: be not offended at my ſilence: I am condemned to it. Allow me to be your conſtant companion; I will endeavour to ſweeten your labour; I will partake of your cares; I will weep with you over this tomb; I will mix my tears with yours; you ſhall never repent the having truſted with your grief a heart, alas, but too ſenſible.

I repent it already, ſaid ſhe with confuſion; and both with down-caſt eyes withdrew. Adelaide, in quitting Fon-

roſe, thought ſhe ſaw on his face the expreſſion of deep ſorrow. I have renewed the ſenſe of his troubles, ſays ſhe, and with what muſt that fill him, ſince he believes himſelf more miſerable than I! From that day Adelaide and Fonroſe neither ſought nor avoided each other; when they met, looks of deſpair were all their converſation; if he found her weeping on the grave of her huſband, his heart was ſeized at once with pity, jealouſy, and grief; he contemplated her in ſilence, and replied to her ſobs only by the moſt profound ſighs.

Two months paſſed away in this painful manner, and Adelaide ſaw the youth of Fonroſe wither as a flower. She was the more afflicted at it as ſhe could not find out the cauſe, for ſhe was far from ſuſpecting it to be herſelf. However,

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as it is natural when two ſentiments ſhare the ſame ſoul that one muſt weaken the other, it is certain the regret of Adelaide, for the death of d'Oreſtan, became leſs violent every day, in proportion as her pity for Fonroſe increaſed. She was very ſure that her pity was innocent; the object of this generous concern was continually preſent, and the languiſhing ſtate in which ſhe ſaw him made her think it her duty to endeavour to comfort him.

You die, ſays ſhe to him, and you add to my other grief, that of ſeeing you conſume before my eyes, without being able to afford a remedy. If the recital of the imprudence of my youth has not rendered me deſpicable to you; if the moſt pure friendſhip is valuable; in fine, if you are not willing to render me more miſerable than I was before I

knew you, truſt me with the cauſe of your ſorrow; you have only me with you to help and comfort you. Your ſecret, ſuppoſing it to be more important than mine, you need not fear being diſcovered. The death of my huſband has put an abyſs between the world and me, and the confidence which I exact will very ſoon be buried in that grave where grief is ſwiftly conducting me.

I hope I ſhall be there firſt, ſaid Fonroſe; leave me, I beſeech you, to finiſh my deplorable life, without giving you reaſon to reproach yourſelf for having abridged the courſe of it.

Oh heaven! what do I hear, cried ſhe aſtoniſhed! I! have I contributed to the evils which overwhelm you? you pierce my heart. What have I done? what have I ſaid? alas, I tremble! Oh God!

God! haſt thou ſent me into the world only to make others wretched? Speak, tell me; this is not a time to conceal who you are; you have diſſembled too long already.

I am then, ſaid Fonroſe, the ſon of the travellers whom you filled with admiration and reſpect. What they recounted of your virtue and charms inſpired me with the fatal deſign of coming to ſee you under this diſguiſe. I have left my family to weep the loſs of their only ſon. I have ſeen you; I know what fixes you in this place; I know the only hope I have is to die in adoring you: ſpare, I beg, your uſeleſs counſels and unjuſt reproaches; my reſolution is as firm, as little to be ſhaken, as yours. If, by betraying my ſecret, you trouble the laſt moments of my life, you will

will do me an unneceſſary wrong, which can be of no ſervice to yourſelf.

Adelaide, touched by the calm deſpair which appeared in this young gentleman, began to conſider how ſhe could recal him to life, and reſtore him to his parents. Heaven, ſays ſhe, offers me this opportunity of acknowledging their goodneſs. Thus, inſtead of putting on an ill-timed rigour, all that the moſt tender pity, all that the moſt conſoling friendſhip, could do to comfort him, was put in practice.

Heavenly creature, cried Fonroſe, I am ſenſible of your goodneſs, and how unwilling you are to be the cauſe of my unhappineſs; but fate has decreed it ſo; your heart is his who ſleeps in that grave; I ſee that nothing can detach you from it;

it; you kindly endeavour to hide from me my misfortune, your goodneſs overpowers me; but pardon me when I tell you, that though you look upon it as your duty never to love me, yet it is impoſſible I ſhould ever ceaſe adoring you.

Adelaide ſaid little more, but took her leave, and returned to her cottage. My father, ſaid ſhe to the old man, do you think you are able to take a journey to Turin? I want a perſon that I can confide in to go to the Marquis and Marchioneſs of Fonroſe about a very intereſting affair. The old man replied, that his zeal to ſerve her gave him ſtrength. Go then, ſays ſhe; you will find them weeping for the loſs of their only ſon; tell them he is living, and in this valley; that I will conduct them to him; but that it is indiſpenſably neceſſary that they ſhould come themſelves to ſeek him.

The

The good old man ſet out, he arrived at Turin, and made himſelf known for the old man of the valley of Savoy. Ah, cried the Marchioneſs! perhaps he is come to tell us of ſome misfortune that has happened to our ſhepherdeſs. I rather hope, anſwered the Marquis, he is come to acquaint us that ſhe conſents to live with us. Her company, replied the Marchioneſs, would be the greateſt alleviation of our ſorrow for the loſs of our ſon. The old man being introduced, proſtrated himſelf before them: they raiſed him. The loſs of a ſon, ſaid he, is now the object of your grief; I am come to tell you he lives: our dear child has diſcovered him; and with this agreeable news ſhe diſpatched me to Turin; but ſhe ſays it is you alone that can recal him.

As he ſpoke thus, ſurprize and joy deprived the lady of her ſenſes: the Marquis, affrighted, called for ſuccour to his wife; they brought her to herſelf; and the whole houſe was acquainted with the joyful news. The Marchioneſs, recovering her ſpirits, ſaid, what ſhall we do! ſeizing the hands of the old man and embracing them tenderly. How ſhall we acknowledge the goodneſs which gives us life! Every thing was prepared for their journey; and they ſet out with the good man, travelling night and day until they arrived at the valley which contained all that was dear to them.

The ſhepherdeſs was in the meadows; the old woman conducted them thither; but what was their ſurprize! their ſon, their dear ſon before them under the habit of a ſimple ſhepherd! their hearts

and

and eyes immediately acknowledged him. Ah, cruel child! cried his mother, running into his arms, What anguiſh have you given us! why have you robbed us of yourſelf, whom we ſo tenderly loved? And what has brought you here? Adoration of her, ſaid Fonroſe, whom you ſo much admired. Pardon, Madam, ſaid Adelaide, pardon your being left ſo long to weep the loſs of your ſon. If I had known ſooner who he was, you would have been ſooner comforted.

After the firſt tranſports of filial affection were paſt, Fonroſe fell back into his uſual melancholy: Come, ſaid the Marquis, let us go and reſt ourſelves in the cot, and forget the chagrin this young ſimpleton has given us. I confeſs with ſhame, Sir, ſaid Fonroſe, that I deſerve the name you give me, for nothing but want of reaſon could, for a moment,

moment, ſuſpend in my heart my tenderneſs for you, could make me forget the moſt ſacred duties, and, in fine, detach me from all that was moſt dear; but this folly, which you gave birth to, I am fully puniſhed for. I love this incomparable girl; I love her without hope. Alas! you know but little of her; ſhe is virtue itſelf. I love her to idolatry. I know I can never be happy without her; and I know ſhe can never be mine.

Has ſhe truſted you with the ſecret of her birth, demanded the Marquis? I have learnt enough, replied he, to aſſure me that it is in nothing inferior to mine: ſhe has renounced a conſiderable fortune to bury herſelf in this deſart. And know you what it is that engages her here? Yes, Sir, but it is a ſecret which ſhe only muſt reveal. She is married, perhaps.

perhaps. No, Sir, ſhe is a widow; but her heart, inſtead of being more at liberty by her widowhood, is bound by links ſtronger even than marriage.

The Marquis ſaid no more, but went on muſing until he arrived at the cottage, when he addreſſed Adelaide in theſe words: My dear girl, you ſee what a change you have made in him who was once Fonroſe: the extravagant paſſion of this young man could be juſtified only by ſuch an object as yourſelf. My wife's conſtant wiſh is to have your company and friendſhip: my ſon cannot live without you: and I deſire nothing more than to call you my child: think then how unhappy you will make us all by a refuſal. Ah! Sir, ſaid ſhe, your goodneſs confounds me; but hear, and judge for me.

She then recited her deplorable adventure; to which ſhe added the name of her family, 'till then unknown to M. de Fonroſe; and concluded with a vow of inviolable fidelity to her huſband.

At theſe words a general conſternation ſpread itſelf over all their faces. Young Fonroſe, almoſt choaked with grief, retired to a corner of the cottage to give it free ſcope. The Marchioneſs preſſing Adelaide in her arms, ſaid, Can you, my dear girl, leave us to weep a ſecond time the loſs of our child? The old man and woman, with eyes full of tears, looked on Adelaide in painful expectation of her anſwer; who, after ſome deliberation, ſpoke thus: Heaven witneſs for me; I would loſe my life rather than be ungrateful for your favours: nothing could add to

own misfortunes but my being the cauſe of yours; therefore I wiſh that Fonroſe himſelf would be my judge; and I beg you would leave me for a moment to ſpeak to him in private. They complied. As ſoon as they were alone; You know, ſaid ſhe, what ſacred ties keep me in this place; if I could be forgetful of, or ceaſe to weep for, a huſband whoſe only fault was loving me too well, I ſhould be the moſt deſpicable of women: eſteem, friendſhip, and gratitude, I feel for you; but theſe are feelings very different from love; you have conceived for me the moſt tender paſſion, it is not poſſible I ſhould return it; at the ſame time I ſee you in a ſituation which would melt the hardeſt heart; it terrifies me to think myſelf the cauſe, and ſtill more when your parents accuſe me of being the author of their calamities: but to convince you I would do all in my

power

power to make you happy, I put my deſtiny into your hands; chuſe of theſe two ſituations that which is moſt deſirable to you, either to renounce me, or to poſſeſs a woman whoſe heart is filled by another object, and whoſe regard for you muſt be too languid to ſatisfy the wiſhes of a lover.

It is enough, ſaid Fonroſe; from a ſoul like yours friendſhip is an equivalent for love. I ſhall, without doubt, be jealous of the tears you will ſhed to the memory of your former huſband; but the cauſe of this jealouſy, in rendering you more worthy, will render you ſtill dearer to me. Then leading her to his parents, She is mine, ſays he, and it is to her reſpect for you that I owe my felicity and my Life.

At this moment the Marchioneſs, unable to expreſs her joy by words, caught Adelaide in her arms, and embraced her with the utmoſt affection. Thus, in yielding to pity and to gratitude, the character of Adelaide grew ſtill more amiable. She was deſirous, before ſhe left the valley, of viſiting her huſhand's grave; when looking at it with the utmoſt regret, her eyes drowned in tears, Oh! my dear d'Oreſtan, ſaid ſhe! if from the bed of death thou canſt read what paſſes in my ſoul, thy ghoſt will not be offended at the ſacrifice which I make; I owe it to this generous family; but my heart will ever remain with thee: I go with the deſign of making others happy, without a hope of being ſo myſelf.

They tore her from this place with a a ſort of violence. The firſt thing ſhe did

did was to raiſe a monument to her deceaſed huſband: the cottage alſo of the old peaſants, who went with her to Turin, was changed into a country houſe as ſimple as ſolitary, where ſhe reſolved to come ſometimes to weep the follies of her youth. But time, and the tender affection of Fonroſe, with the fruits of a ſecond marriage, have awakened in her ſoul ſome impreſſions of a new paſſion; and ſhe is mentioned as a woman worthy of reſpect, even in her infidelity.

END of the SECOND TALE.

THE

HAPPY DIVORCE.

TALE III.

DISCONTENT, and a deſire of change in married people, are, for the moſt part, the fault of falſe calculation. An idea of happineſs, greater than what is commonly found, gives the too delicate mind a diſguſt, even to that which it might enjoy. The imagination, finding itſelf deceived, flies to new objects, the perſpective of which dazzle in their turns; but on a nearer approach vaniſh away: thus from illuſion to illuſion they paſs through life, only changing the chimera; it being the misfortune of a too-refined

taſte to be diſpleaſed with what others never ſo much as think of.

Lucila, in a convent, had painted the charms of love, and delights of marriage, in the brighteſt colours that the moſt lively imagination at the age of fifteen could form. She had ſeen the world only in the ingenious fictions of romance; and her lively fancy had pictured a lover and a huſband ſuch as had been figured to her in theſe fables, always tender and paſſionate, ever ſtudying to pleaſe by new ſervices and varied pleaſures. Theſe were the thoughts of Lucila when her friends took her out of the convent, to marry her to the Marquis de Liſere. When ſhe firſt ſaw him, though pleaſed with his perſon, ſhe was far from being determined in her choice, but as he was not one of thoſe paſſionate enamorato's which ſhe

ſhe had met with in her reading, ſhe was humble enough not to expect adoration at firſt ſight; and the preſſing entreaties, joined with the authority of her friends, precipitated her into this marriage before the Marquis ſhewed any ſigns of a violent paſſion.

No character could be more ſincere or more juſt than this gentleman's: in wedlock his deſign was to render his lady happy, by being her friend and gaining her confidence; perſuaded that a huſband who makes himſelf feared, invites his wife to deceive, and authoriſes her to hate him. To purſue the plan which he had laid down, it was not eſſential to feel that love which knows no rule; for which reaſon he ſhould have informed himſelf of the taſte of the lady before he had engaged, and reſolved never to marry one whoſe wiſhes were ſo extravagant; for

want of that caution, Lucila found in her huſband nothing of that attentive complaiſance, thoſe pure and ſweet delights, that love which finds no abatement of its ardour; on the contrary, the Marquis behaved with an uniform tender friendſhip.

For ſome time ſhe flattered herſelf that enchantment and tranſports would have their turn: but Liſere was unalterable. Revolving theſe things in her mind one day, It is very ſingular, ſaid ſhe; I am young, I am handſome, and yet my huſband does not love me; I am his by right, for which reaſon he poſſeſſes me with coldneſs; but why do I let him be thus tranquil? Can he deſire that which is his without reſerve? He would be paſſionate if he was jealous! How unjuſt are men! they muſt be tormented to be pleaſed: be tender, be faithful,

faithful, and they deſpiſe you; caprice, coquetry, and inconſtancy awaken them; they only value pleaſures in proportion to what they coſt them. Liſere, leſs certain of my love, would be a thouſand times more amorous. Let us be in the faſhion: in the midſt of the gay world it is eaſy for me to give him pain if he is capable of being jealous.

In purſuance of this fine ſcheme, Lucila aſſumed all the gaiety of a coquet; affected familiarity with her male acquaintance, and daily formed parties in which the Marquis was not engaged; this did not paſs unobſerved by him: I have been married but ſix months, ſays he, and my wife is tired of me; What a fine ſituation I ſhould have been in had I been doatingly fond of her! but happily my paſſion does not deprive me of reaſon, and I will employ it to diſſemble

my

my chagrin, and endeavour by good humour to recall her; this does not always ſucceed, but reproaches, complaints, and violence will never effect it.

The moderation, complaiſance, and ſeeming tranquility of the Marquis, mortified Lucila. Alas, ſaid ſhe! I have been deceived! this man will never love; he is one of thoſe cold ſouls whom nothing can move, and I am condemned to paſs my life with a ſtatue who can neither love nor hate! Where are the joys which were made for feeling ſouls! the charms of paſſionate hearts! Love! that raiſeſt to heaven on wings of fire, where are thoſe delights with which thou bleſſeſt happy lovers? thoſe raviſhing tranſports which inſpire each in their turn, where are they, purſued ſhe? Only in love, free and unreſtrained: but why ſhould the Marquis feel that generous

generous paſſion for me? What ſacrifice have I made him? By what heroick act have I moved the ſenſibility of his ſoul? Where is the merit of having accepted for a huſband a man young, rich, and handſome? Is it a mark of love to conſent to an advantageous match? Yet how hard is it for a woman of ſixteen, on whom, without vanity, nature has beſtowed gifts to pleaſe, and to excite love, (for I can neither be blind to the graces of my perſon, or inſenſible of the qualities of my heart) to languiſh out her days with a cold indifference, and ſee twenty years, which might be happy, roll without pleaſure? Cruel family! They have choſen for me an honeſt man: What a rare preſent have they made me! certain it is not that alone can make me happy.

Diſcontent

Diſcontent ſoon degenerated into ill humour on the ſide of Lucila; Liſere thought he perceived an averſion in her. His friends diſpleaſed her; their company was troubleſome; ſhe received them with the moſt diſtant civility. The Marquis could conceal his diſlike no longer: Madam, ſaid he, the deſign of marriage is to render each party happy; now we are not ſo, and it is uſeleſs to pique ourſelves on a conſtancy which we are not obliged to. Our fortune enables us to live ſeparate; you ſhall be at liberty to follow your own inclination, and I will follow mine: all I aſk of you is to behave with decency, and remember the duty you owe to yourſelf.

Moſt willingly, Sir, replied Lucila with great coldneſs: and from that moment the lady had her own ſervants, her own table, and her own apartment. The aſſemblies

aſſemblies of Lucila became very ſoon the moſt brilliant in Paris. Her acquaintance was courted by all the young and gay of both ſexes, while ſhe received the homage of one, and excited the envy of the other, without incurring ſcandal by ſhewing a partial liking to any.

At length one appeared who was more formidable than the reſt: it was the Count de Blamze, at whoſe approach all his rivals were diſmayed. He was the idol of the French court: his perſon handſome, his addreſs graceful. He ſpoke little, but had the art of ſaying the moſt common things with an air and voice that rendered them uncommonly pleaſing. A modeſt aſſurance formed his character: he would decide with a look the moſt ſweet, and a tone the moſt poſitive in the world: he would hear the opinions of others with patience, and reply only by

a ſmile. Never had he taken pains to improve his reaſon: politeneſs was his ſole ſtudy, and by a happy confidence had made himſelf looked upon as the oracle of taſte and the regulator of the faſhion, inſomuch that it was never ſaid a carriage was elegant, or a dreſs well choſen, which had not his approbation. The little words, it looks well, or it is pretty, from his mouth, made the happineſs of the beau monde, while his ſilence filled them with deſpair. His opinion was likewiſe looked upon as a ſtandard for beauty, and in a circle of ladies ſhe who was honoured with his particular attention was from that moment a toaſt.

Lucila had entertained a high notion of the merit of Blamze before he was introduced to her, but her eſteem for him was doubled by obſerving the great deference

ference which even his rivals paid him.

She was ſtruck with his perſon, and ſtill more with his graceful humility: he entered the room and paid his compliments to the company with the moſt reſpectful air, and then ſeated himſelf in the loweſt place; but immediately all eyes were fixed on him. The men of faſhion examined with pleaſed attention his lace, his embroidery, the dreſs of his hair, in a word his whole appearance: they enquired the names of his taylor, and other tradeſmen. How is it, ſay they, that we ſee no cloaths ſo genteely made, nor colours ſo well choſen as yours.

Blamze replied modeſtly, that they coſt him but little pains: induſtry, continued he, is for things of greater con-

ſequence. Saying theſe words, he pulled out his ſnuff box, the beauty of which excited new curioſity: Blamze ſaid it was the work of a young artiſt whoſe name he had forgotten. They aſked him the price: he replied, ſmiling, that he ſeldom remembered the price of any thing, and had quite forgotten that. Then turning to Lucila, I am aſhamed, Madam, ſaid he, that theſe trifles ſhould employ an attention which ought to be fixed on an object much more deſerving of it: pardon me if I lend an ear to the frivolous queſtions of youth; never did complaiſance coſt me more dear. I hope, continued he, in a very low voice, you will permit me to viſit you in ſome moment more free from impertinence.

I ſhall be very glad to ſee you, Sir, replied Lucila bluſhing; which was returned

returned by a reſpectful bow, accompanied with a tender ſmile from Blamze. The company obſerving it, judged an intrigue was beginning. Lucila, who was ignorant of the true meaning of the words which had been ſpoken in her ear, and knew not that ſhe had made an aſſignation, gave but little attention to the intelligent glances that ſhe received from the women, and the light pleaſantries which eſcaped the men. She delivered herſelf inſenſibly to her reflections, and remained penſive the whole evening.

The company ſtaid after Blamze had taken his leave, and the converſation turned upon his character; the men ſpoke of him with eſteem, the ladies with complaiſance. They ſaid no man was more honourable, more gallant, or more reſpectful; and of twenty women

whom he had courted, ſcarcely one had reaſon of complaint.

Lucila was all attention; nothing eſcaped her: Twenty women, ſaid ſhe to herſelf! but why ſhould I be ſurpriſed? He is ſeeking one worthy to fix his affections, and capable of returning them. She hoped ſhe ſhould ſee him the next day early, before the rout began, but ſhe was diſappointed; he did not come, and ſhe grew quite uneaſy: at length ſhe received a billet, the purport of which was, his deſpair at the loſs of one of the happieſt moments of his life: ſome impertinent great ones had ſo ſtrenuouſly inſiſted on his company, that it was not poſſible for him to leave them, but hoped to be happy the following day; and conjured Lucilia to permit him to viſit her in the morning, to abridge, ſays he, the cruel hours of abſence.

That

That evening the company aſſembled as uſual, the lady received them with a coldneſs which piqued them. We ſhall not ſee Blamze this evening, ſaid Clariſſa with an air of concern, he is gone to ſup with Araminta. Lucila turned pale at theſe words; and the gaiety which ſurrounded her only ſerved to heighten the chagrin which ſhe endeavoured to hide: but ſhe was willing to believe that Clariſſa had, through envy, made a falſe report: ſhe was reſolved to ſee and hear him before ſhe condemned.

In the morning, when ſhe was at her toilet, Blamze entered in an elegant diſhabil. Lucila was a little ſurpriſed to ſee him appear ſo negligent, and perhaps would have been piqued at it had he given her time for reflection, but he opened the converſation with ſo many

gallant things on the beauty of her complection, the lovely brown of her locks, and the brightneſs of her eyes, that it was not poſſible for her to be diſpleaſed. Nevertheleſs the idea of Araminta was ſtill uppermoſt in her thoughts, but it would have been treſpaſſing on her delicacy to have betrayed any ſigns of jealouſy. She ſatisfied herſelf with enquiring how he had ſpent the preceding day. How did I ſpend it, replied he! alas! do I know myſelf? How tireſome is the world in general! How happy are they who can live at diſtance from the crowd, bleſt in the ſociety of one whom they love! Believe me, madam, was you once to bid adieu to that tumult in which your days are whirled away, you would taſte a tranquility to which your life is now a ſtranger. Tell me, my dear Madam, among all the lovers who compoſe your train, is there one

whom

whom you have honoured with your eſteem?

The eaſy familiarity of Blamze at firſt aſtoniſhed Lucila; but this laſt queſtion ſhe was unable to anſwer. I am, perhaps, impertinent, rejoined he, perceiving her confuſion. Not at all ſo, replied Lucila, recovering herſelf. I have nothing to diſguiſe. I amuſe myſelf with the follies of theſe young coxcombs, but not one of them ſeems worthy of a ſerious thought. Blamze ſmiling, told Lucila ſhe was too ſevere; and ſpoke of his rivals with kindneſs: Cleon for example, ſaid he, would be very agreeable, if he confined himſelf to talk only of the things which he underſtands, but his misfortune is to talk too much of things he knows nothing of, and proves, with a good deal of wit, that he wants common ſenſe.

Clairfons is a fop, it is true, but he has much ſpirit and vivacity, and wants only to be poſſeſſed of a real paſſion for the fair ſex to make him perfectly amiable.

Plomblac is a man of plain ſincerity; and that ſimplicity which the world terms folly, would pleaſe me was I a lady; I fear ſome coquet will make her advantage of it. But by what appears at preſent, purſued Blamze, I believe you to be perfectly free. Give me leave, Madam, to aſk what uſe that liberty is of to you? I endeavour to enjoy it, replied Lucila. That is a vain endeavour, returned the count, it ſeems a parodox; but liberty is never enjoyed 'till it is renounced, the only care is to loſe it agreeably. You are in the bloom of youth, and height of beauty; flatter not yourſelf you can be long indifferent;

if

if you will not give your heart, it will give itſelf: my wiſh is, that you may find a lover worthy of you; a man of honour, who knows the world, and who is able to defend you from thoſe dangers to which your youth and innocence are expoſed.

Such a man as yourſelf, for example! ſaid Lucila, in an ironical tone. Ah! lovely Lucila, cried Blamze! I ſhould be but too happy to be wholly yours: tell me how I ſhall diſengage myſelf from the world? It is not to be done, replied the lady; you will excite too many complaints, you will draw on yourſelf too many enemies. As for complaints, ſaid the Count coldly, I am accuſtomed to them; and enemies are of no conſequence when my own happineſs is at ſtake. But my age! ſaid Lucila with a ſmile of raillery: we are

apt

apt to be timid; and I tremble at the apprehenſion of being abandoned to the deſpair which Araminta now feels by your inconſtancy. Araminta, replied Blamze without any emotion; Araminta is a wiſe woman, and one who will never have cauſe for deſpair! I find you have been told of our acquaintance; you ſhall hear the hiſtory of it: ſhe is one of thoſe ladies, who ſeeing herſelf in the wain of her beauty, was willing, before it was too late, to do ſomething which might prevent her from falling into oblivion. She made me ſome advances which it would not have been honourable to neglect; I was too gallant not to return them: to give it more the air of an intrigue, ſhe has taken a genteel little houſe, where I viſit her: we ſupped together laſt night: ſhe invited only five of her friends, and I took an equal number of mine: I behaved as a lover,

and

and left the party convinced of my being ſo: Araminta is enchanted with this deceit, which brings her into faſhion; and I can quit her when I pleaſe, without having one reproach to fear. I will ſubmit my conduct, Madam, to your cenſure. The reputation of a lady is as dear to me as my own: I may ſay more ſo; for I would willingly ſacrifice my vanity to her glory. The greateſt mortification that can happen to one of your ſex is, the being forſaken by ours: now with me there is no danger of that; I always give the lady the honour of diſcharging me; I ſometimes carry it ſo far as to appear inconſolable, and ſhut myſelf up from ſociety for ſome days. By this you may ſee, charming Lucila, that our ſex are not ſo inconſtant as we are ſaid to be, and that there are ſtill principles of honour among us.

Lucila

Lucila was aſtoniſhed at the new ſtile of this addreſs and her ſurpriſe increaſed at each word that ſhe heard. What, Sir, ſaid ſhe, Are theſe principles of honour? Yes, Madam, but they are rare, and not at all reliſhed by the young gentlemen of this age, whoſe greateſt boaſt is deceiving your ſex. Happy ſhould I be if theſe ſentiments, ſingular as they are, were agreeable to you, and I might flatter myſelf with being not quite unworthy of your favour. I hope, returned Lucila, always to conduct myſelf in ſuch a manner as to eſcape the cenſure of the world, and then I ſhall run no riſque of being forſaken by the male part of it. Certainly, Madam, a perſon ſo amiable as you are cannot fear it; but you deſerve a lover capable of valuing your diſtinguiſhed merit.

Liſere is a good man, but not formed with a ſoul capable of making you happy. Fortunately he leaves you to your own free will, and you would be unworthy of ſuch treatment ſhould you loſe the moſt precious moments of your life in indolence and diſſipation. Perhaps, Sir, ſaid Lucila, I ſhould not have been more happy with any other man than I am with Liſere. It muſt have been very difficult for me to have made a choice, ſince an attachment once formed with me would have been laſting as my life. Is it poſſible, Madam, at your age? can you pique yourſelf on conſtancy? ah! could I believe it I ſhould, for the firſt time, make love, kneel at your feet, and beg your acceptance of my heart. The firſt time did you ſay, Sir? Yes, Madam; ſingular as this declaration may appear, it is really true. Hitherto the ladies have ſaved me the trouble of making

making advances; but too lovely Lucila, forgive me when I ſay, I feel for you, what was 'till now unknown to me, a real paſſion. Well, Sir, I pardon your confeſſion on account of its ſingularity, nay more, I own it does not diſpleaſe me. Heavens! you tranſport me, you acknowledge my love is not diſpleaſing to you! complete my happineſs, Madam, I beſeech you, by giving me hopes of a return. Hold, Sir, that is going too far; I will hear no more at this time. Ah, Madam, you treat me as a child. I treat you, Sir, as a reaſonable being. And was it then, Madam, to talk reaſon to me, that you did me the honour of a private converſation? Adorned, as you are, with all the charms that nature could beſtow, how can I ſee, and not ſay I adore you. You are very gallant, Sir, replied the lady, but that is not ſufficient

to

to merit my friendſhip, and determine my inclination. Pardon me, Madam, if I aſk what I ſhall do to merit it. I muſt have a more perfect knowledge of your character, a firmer perſuaſion of your ſentiments for me, and even then, I promiſe no reward, nor are you to pretend to any. You are to judge for yourſelf if it is worth while to love on theſe terms. Nothing, charming Lucila, can be too much to obtain your favour; but would you have me, who am courted by all France, renounce the world, and all its charms, in hopes of an uncertain happineſs? I muſt confeſs, returned Lucila, ſuch a requeſt would be unreaſonable, your moments are too precious to be thrown away; and I would adviſe you to quit the purſuit. Ah! Madam, replied the Count, do not trifle with me; I have long ſought an object to fix my affections, and in you believed

lieved I had found one, but I cannot live on diſtant hopes. You are in the right, returned the lady, you had better think no more of me; for though I am young, and perhaps ſenſible, yet be aſſured my youth and ſenſibility will never make me act imprudently. But can you, Madam, anſwered the Count, believe there is a man in the world who would ſpend his life in adoring you at an awful diſtance? or do you deſign to throw away your youth without ever taſting the ſweets of mutual love? I am not ſure, replied Lucila, that I ſhall ever love; but I am convinced my time will be better ſpent than in regret and repentance, the certain conſequences of an intrigue. I admire you, Madam, I admire you, ſays Blamze, taking his leave of her; but I have not the honour to be of the ancient chivalry, nor was it with a deſign of learning the

laws

laws of knight errantry that I waited on you this morning.

Lucila, ſtruck with the interview ſhe had had with Blamze, remained ſome time in ſilent aſtoniſhment; 'till at length ſurprize gave place to reflection. This then, ſaid ſhe, is the man of taſte, the man ſo much careſſed, ſo much admired; he does me the favour to think me handſome, and believes me capable of conſtancy, for which he loves me, and has the confidence to expect I ſhould at once receive it with joy. Are women then ſo eaſily won? happily I am not ſo. Under this air of modeſty, which he aſſumes, what ſelf-ſufficiency, what preſumption is concealed? Ah! I ſee that no misfortune can humble us ſo much as that of being pleaſed with a fop.

The ſame evening, after the opera, the faſhionable world aſſembled at Lucila's as uſual. Plomblac, with an air of myſtery, acquainted her, that neither Blamze, nor Clairfons, would wait on her. It is very well, ſaid ſhe; I do not deſire from my friends a conſtrained aſſiduity. If Blamze is of that number, replied the ingenious Plomblac, Clairfons has delivered you from his aſſiduities, at leaſt for a time. What do you mean, Sir? Pray explain yourſelf, replied Lucila in a fright. Do not be alarmed, Madam, returned he; it is not ſo bad as might have been feared: I will tell you the whole. As ſoon as the opera was finiſhed, and the curtain let down, we were on the ſtage, as uſual, attending to Blamze while he gave his opinion on the ſinging, the dancing, and the decorations; he then careleſly aſked us if we deſigned to ſup with

with the little Marchioneſs; and pardon the epithet, Madam, it was of you whom he ſpoke. I ſhall not be there, continued he, for this morning we had a little diſpute. I demanded what it was about.

You muſt know, rejoined Blamze, I had made an aſſignation, in which I failed; the lady was piqued at it: however, to make reparation for my fault, I waited on her to-day at her toilet; I made love, and was well received; but when I would have preſſed for a proof of her affection, ſhe aſſured me nothing but time, and conſtant marks of a diſintereſted paſſion, could make any impreſſion on her. Though I had ſome deſire, it was not enough to engage me in ſo tedious a ſiege; but if either of you have courage to undertake the exploit, the way to vanquiſh is to

act the dying lover; againſt that deceit her virtue is too weak to reſiſt. Though I was well perſuaded what he ſaid was falſe, continued the young gentleman, I thought it moſt prudent to hold my tongue.

Clairfons was not ſo patient, but declared aloud he did not believe a word of the ſtory: this accuſation of falſhood produced a challenge: they went out together: I followed them. Clairfons received a ſlight wound, and Blamze two, which, though not mortal, are much deeper than his antagoniſt's. As I aſſiſted in helping him to his coach, If Clairfons, ſaid he, knows how to make an advantage of this adventure, he will have Lucila. A woman but ill defends herſelf againſt a man who defends her ſo well. I diſpenſe with its being a ſecret to her: it is but juſt ſhe ſhould know

know how much ſhe is indebted to him.

Lucila could not hide the trouble which this recital gave her: ſhe feigned a pain in her head; and the company underſtanding it as a polite way of deſiring to be left alone, took their leaves. She then delivered herſelf up to reflections. She was much touched with the zeal that Clairfons expreſſed to revenge her injury. But how much would ſhe be humbled ſhould this affair be made publick, and Liſere become acquainted with it. Happily for her, Plomblac and Clairfons made it a point of honour to conceal it; and Blamze could take no pleaſure in boaſting of an adventure which had coſt him ſo dear. The world, undoubtedly, would enquire how a man, hitherto ſo remarkable for diſcretion, ſhould at once forfeit it, and

of favours which he had always before induſtriouſly concealed.

Clairfons ſoon recovered, and Lucila received him with a tenderneſs which 'till then was unknown to her; no ſervice could certainly have endeared him more than that which he had rendered her. On the other hand, Clairfons became paſſionately enamoured of Lucila; but the more ſhe owed, the leſs did he dare to expect payment: he would have had a ſenſible pleaſure in finding her generous, but that pleaſure would have ceaſed had he looked on it as a debt: thus was he more timid when with her, than he would have been had he merited nothing.

Lucila ſaw this delicacy of ſentiment, and it greatly enhanced her value for him. Nevertheleſs the fear of ſhewing too

too many marks of favour, or ſeeming ungrateful, made her conceal the confidence that Plomblac had placed in her: thus her civilities appeared free and diſintereſted, and made the greater impreſſion on the mind of her lover. Their mutual friendſhip every day encreaſed; they related all their little adventures to each other, and by degrees Clairfons became more familiar, and Lucila leſs reſerved: he had not as yet dared to confeſs his paſſion, 'till a little incident happened which befriended him.

One day as they were ſitting alone together, Lucila dropped her fan, Clairfons took it up and preſented it to her; ſhe received it with a ſweet ſmile: at that moment he caught hold of her hand and kiſſed it with tranſport; Lucila in great confuſion made a ſlight effort to

draw it back, which he oppoſed with a gentle violence; his eyes tenderly fixed on her's, where were written the ſecret ſentiments of her heart.

We love! ſaid Clairfons, mad with joy. Alas! we do love, replied Lucila, with a deep ſigh; it is now too late to diſſemble. But remember I am under obligations that ought to be ever inviolable; and, if I am dear to you, you will look upon them as ſacred.

Clairfons had too much reſpect for Lucila to wiſh her to be guilty of a a crime. He was enchanted at being loved, and bounded his deſires to the poſſeſſion of a heart, pure, virtuous, and faithful. They love but little, ſaid he in a pleaſing delirium, who cannot be happy in the ſole pleaſure of being loved. What ſtupid ſavage would call by the name

name of rigour, that reſiſtance which fearful modeſty oppoſes to mad deſires? Can I, lovely Lucila, Can I complain when you ſmile on me? No; my ſoul ſubmits to that deſtiny which keeps you from me. While I read in your eyes ſentiments which tranſport my ſenſes, I revere your virtue; and never ſhould pardon myſelf, could I forget my duty ſo far as ever to attempt to ſubvert it.

Theſe heroic notions enchanted Lucila, and Clairfons each day more tender, was each day more loved, more happy, and more worthy of being ſo. But at length the pleaſantries of his friends, and their ſuſpicions of that virtue which he adored, poiſoned his happineſs. He grew dull, gloomy, and jealous, always diſpleaſed, always taking umbrage. Lucila was continually receiving new proofs

proofs of her bondage, by daily complaints and conſtant reproaches. Every gentleman treated by her with politeneſs was looked on as a rival, who ought to be baniſhed. The firſt ſacrifice he exacted was made without reſiſtance: he then demanded a new one, he obtained it: he aſked another; Lucila, piqued at his behaviour, refuſed to comply. Clairfons imagined this refuſal proceeded from an invincible attachment; and his love, hitherto ſo delicate and ſubmiſſive, became in an inſtant fierce and tyrannick. Lucila was frightened; ſhe endeavoured to appeaſe him, but in vain. I will not believe, ſaid the imperious Clairfons, I will not believe that you love me, and that you live for me only, as I live for you. Ah! if I poſſeſs, if I fill your ſoul, can there be room for any other object? Ought it to give you any pain to renounce that which makes me uneaſy?

eaſy? It would coſt me nothing to give up every thing which was diſpleaſing to you: What do I ſay! Is it not a conſtant violence to my eyes to behold aught but Lucila? Oh! would heaven deliver you from this croud which ſurrounds you, and which robs me every minute of your thoughts. The ſolitude which terrifies you would fill my wiſhes. Our ſouls are not of the ſame nature, or rather, the love that you feel is of a different texture from mine. You complain I require ſacrifices; require of me, Lucila, in your turn; command me to give up any thing that I hold dear, and ſee how readily I will comply; the pleaſure of obliging you will make me full amends for the loſs of the world beſide.

You think ſo now, returned the tender and ſincere Lucila; but you deceive yourſelf: one ſacrifice is made with faciliy, but many

many conceſſions are diſagreeable; the greateſt complaiſance may be worn out and exhauſted. While ſhe ſpoke thus, Clairfons fixed his eyes on her, ſparkling with impatience. Believe me, purſued ſhe, the proofs of true love, and which alone are worth receiving, are what the heart freely gives without compulſion.

What cold analyſis, cried he! What vain metaphyſick! I love you, Madam: nothing is more true. I would ſacrifice a thouſand lives to pleaſe you. I would tear myſelf from the univerſe beſides, to live for you alone; but I require a return. If you love, nothing can be ſo precious to you as my repoſe; and my uneaſineſs, ſuppoſing it without cauſe, you would endeavour to diſpel. But why do I ſay without cauſe? You give me but too much reaſon for alarms and ſuſpicions;

ſuſpicions; and how can I be chearful, ſeeing all that approach you intereſt you more than I?

Ah, Sir! what do I owe you for this explanation, ſaid Lucila, with a deep ſigh? You ſhew me the deep abyſs into which love would have drawn me: I now ſee there is no ſlavery equal to that which is impoſed by a jealous lover. Do I, Madam, make a ſlave of you? Have not you an abſolute empire over me? May you not diſpoſe of me as you pleaſe? Sir, I have ſuffered a long time; I am now tired: you have drawn me from my illuſion, and I ſhall be no more deceived. Be my friend if you pleaſe: it is the only title I ſhall now know you by. Ah! cruel! will you kill me? No, Sir, I would reſtore your peace and my own. You over-

whelm

whelm me! what is my crime? That of loving you too well, and not eſteeming myſelf enough. Ah, Lucila! I conjure you! It is in vain, Sir. Jealouſy is a vice in your diſpoſition, and not to be corrected. I know you! I begin to fear you! and I ceaſe to love you! I ſee my frankneſs diſpleaſes; but of two evils I chuſe the leaſt; and in taking from you the right of being jealous, I reſtore your tranquility.

I know you in my turn, replied Clairfons! The delicacy of a feeling ſoul can never agree with the lightneſs of yours. It is a Blamze who ought to be your lover; and I am well recompenced. Hold, Sir! interrupted Lucila; I know all that I owe you; but I retire to ſpare you the ſhame of reproaching me. Clairfons went away furious, and reſolved

reſolved never more to ſee a woman he had ſo tenderly loved, and who had treated him ſo ungratefully.

Lucila, as ſoon as ſhe was alone, reflected on her ſituation. She ſaw on one ſide the dangers to which love expoſed her, and on the other the ſad proſpect of an eternal indifference. Why, ſaid ſhe, has heaven given me a feeling heart? Was it to render me the ſport of a fop, the victim of a tyrant, or the ſad companion of a ſtock who is to be affected with nothing? Theſe thoughts plunged her into a melancholy which ſhe could not diſſemble: her female acquaintance perceived it, and were alarmed. She is loſt, ſaid they, unleſs we contrive to draw her from this gloom. She is diſguſted with the world. She prefers ſolitude: and we muſt find ſome way to renew her taſte for pleaſure,

or ſhe will fall again into the power of her wiſe huſband, and we ſhall loſe the brighteſt aſſembly in Paris.

Cephiſa, the greateſt coquet of the age, declared ſhe had thought of a lover who would reconcile Lucila to the beau monde. She has, ſaid ſhe, a romantick taſte, and the magnificent Dorimon is juſt the man who will ſuit her: let us engage her to dine at his country houſe. This motion was approved of; the party was made; and Dorimon was appriſed of the honour deſigned him.

This gentleman was poſſeſſed of a large fortune; he employed the beſt artiſts in the kingdom, and paid them liberally, which had acquired him the reputation of a connoiſſeur, and man of taſte.

The

The ſeat of Dorimon, which I am going to deſcribe, will appear to my readers as a fairy caſtle. It was ſituated on the rich borders of the Seine, in form of an amphitheatre. The trees, which ſurrounded it, ſerved as a defence from the rough northern winds, and the ſcorching heat of the ſun. It was built on the ſide of a hill, on the top of which was a caſcade abounding with water more clear than chryſtal; ſo contrived by the induſtrious hand of art, as to wind in many rivulets through the verdure, and at laſt empty itſelf into the boſom of the Seine. An ingenious caprice ſeemed to have deſigned the gardens, which were watered by the waves: they were laid out with an elegant negligence; and nature ſeemed to predominate over art. We often ſee the utmoſt magnificence diſplayed without the leaſt taſte; on this the eye is ſoon tired with gazing, but here a

continued variety enchanted the ſenſes, and every freſh object added beauty to the laſt, while both conſpired to embelliſh a new one, which ſucceeded without effacing the former.

This delightful ſcene was terminated by a palace of Corinthian architecture, admired for its elegance and lightneſs; and, by the ornamented outſide, proclaimed the luxury which reigned within. Painting, ſtatuary, all that fancy has invented to delight the ſenſes, appeared here in the utmoſt profuſion.

Lucila was dazzled with ſo much magnificence. The firſt evening ſeemed like a dream. The eaſe, the vivacity, the gallantry, with which Dorimon did the honours of his houſe, the change of ſcene he produced by a look, the abſolute empire he had over pleaſure, recalled

called to Lucila's mind all she had read of the most celebrated enchanters. If Dorimon had taken advantage of the transport into which he had thrown her, perhaps the dream would have ended like our modern romances; but Dorimon only dared to ask of Lucila, that she would sometimes honour his hermitage with her company; for by that name he called his seat.

The ladies in company with Lucila observed her carefully; the most experienced judged that Dorimon was too full of himself to be long her favourite. He should, said they, seize the first moments of her surprize; it is an opportunity which never offers a second time. Mean while as Lucila was ruminating on what she had seen: her ideas of Dorimon were raised to the highest pitch: she supposed him to have a lively wit, a

cultivated mind, a delicate taſte, and, in a word, to be a lover who would ever occupy himſelf in the care of pleaſing. This picture, flattering as it is, had ſome reſemblance. Dorimon was ſtill young, had a good perſon, and a ſprightly carriage; he had not much warmth of ſentiment, but much cunning: no perſon ſaid more gallant things; yet he had not the gift of perſuaſion, except when he paid his addreſſes to a coquet; but to a woman of ſentiment he was not in the leaſt dangerous.

Lucila conſented to repeat her viſit: but in vain did Dorimon vary pleaſures with more art than taſte: Lucila was at firſt lightly ſtruck, but very ſoon ſatiated; and before the day was ſpent, ſhe began to be tired of this delighful ſeat.

Dorimon

Dorimon, who never quitted her, put in practice every art of pleaſing; but he was not what ſhe at firſt imagined. She believed him a deity, and found him only a man. The pomp of his houſe was eclipſed; and Dorimon, in aiming to ſurpaſs, fell below the idea ſhe had conceived of him. He was very far from ſuſpecting himſelf fallen in her eſteem, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to declare himſelf her lover.

One evening he had a concert, to which the ladies were invited; as ſoon as it was over, he drew Lucila, as if by chance, into a lonely cloſet; as ſoon as ſhe entered, ſhe was ſurpriſed to ſee her own picture, repreſented as the goddeſs of beauty, attended by a thouſand little loves, to whom ſhe was giving laws. At this ſudden piece of gallantry Lucila

ſtarted with ſurprize; and Dorimon ſeizing the inſtant of that ſudden emotion, placed her on a ſopha: Reign here, ſaid he; behold your throne; here you have an abſolute ſovereignty.

My throne! ſaid Lucila, ſeating herſelf with an air of gaiety, if theſe are my ſubjects I am queen of a pretty people truly. Among the number deign to admit me, adorable Lucila, replied Dorimon, throwing himſelf at her feet, and giving her a look of ardour which affrighted her! Ah, what do you mean, Sir, ſaid ſhe with a ſerious air? you are not a child? At theſe words ſhe attempted to riſe, but he held her; and the efforts ſhe made to eſcape, rendered him more hardy. Heavens! where am I, cried ſhe in a terror? Let me go, or my cries ——

Theſe words undeceived him. Excuſe, Madam, ſaid he, an imprudence that you have been in ſome meaſure the cauſe of. To come here as you have done, and repoſe yourſelf on a ſopha, what was it but inviting the treatment you have received? But I ſee we do not well underſtand each other. Oh! not at all, returned Lucila, as ſhe went out, burſting with rage and indignation. Dorimon followed her, confuſed at his miſtake.

Happily their abſence had not been long enough to be taken notice of. Lucila diſſembled her chagrin, and told the company ſhe had been ſeeing a cloſet that was very prettily decorated. Supper coming in interrupted the converſation. The delicacy of this feaſt ſeemed to out-do all that had gone before. But Dorimon was embarraſſed in doing the

honours of his houſe. His repulſe had robbed him of that gaiety ſo natural, and he ſeemed to be no more himſelf. As for Luciſa, ſhe replied to the gallant things which were ſaid to her, to draw her out of her reverie, only by a forced ſmile, which politeneſs obliged her to put on to diſguiſe her ill humour.

When the ladies were returning home, their converſation ran upon the many fine things they had ſeen. This man leads a life of enchantment, ſay they: pleaſure ſeems obedient to his call; happineſs waits on his will. No, replied Lucila coldly, it is not in the power of riches to command that; true happineſs is only to be found in the heart; and, I believe, Dorimon is too ſelfiſh to be capable of feeling it. Really, my dear child, ſays Cephiſa, you are very hard to be pleaſed. Very hard indeed, Madam,

Madam, replied ſhe with a ſigh; and during the reſt of the journey kept a profound ſilence.

As ſoon as ſhe was alone, Is this then, ſays ſhe, what the world calls pleaſure? I have ſeen it all; I have been courted by a fop, a man poſſeſſed with jealouſy, and another who thinks the moſt ſevere virtue muſt yield to the pomp which ſurrounds him. Ah! how I hate the writers of romance who have bewitched me with their fables, by an imagination full of a thouſand chimeras. I have found my huſband inſipid, though, in reality, he is preferable to all that I have known. He is ſimple, but is not that ſimplicity vaſtly ſuperior to the vain pretenſions of a Blamze? he is tranquil in his love, and is not that more deſirable than the violent paſſion of a Clairfons? he did not love to an exceſs, but he loved

loved only me; and, if I had been reaſonable, he loved enough to make me happy. I ſhould not have experienced thoſe quick tranſports which are in an inſtant at an end, but his complaiſance, his ſweetneſs of temper, his delicate behaviour, would give me more pure and ſolid pleaſures, had I been capable of taſting them. Inſenſible that I was! I ran after illuſions, and loſt real happineſs. Alas! it is high time to acknowledge my errors when I have loſt the friendſhip, the confidence, perhaps the eſteem of my huſband. Merciful heaven! yet what have I to reproach myſelf with except the imprudence of youth? but will Liſere believe, or deign even to hear me? What hinders me from making the trial? the fear of being humbled: but Liſere is a man of honour; and, if he has patience with my follies, will he refuſe my return? I have only

to

to detach myſelf from a pernicious acquaintance, to enjoy the ſociety of thoſe friends whom he reſpects, and whom I can ſee without bluſhing. If I cannot at once regain his heart, my conſtant endeavour muſt be to render myſelf in time worthy of it; and at leaſt be reconciled to myſelf if I cannot to my huſband.

Liſere with a ſecret concern, obſerved his wife's behaviour: he had ſtill hopes, from the goodneſs of her heart. She will ſee, ſaid he, how very trifling are all the pleaſures which ſhe ſeels; the folly of the women, the vanity of the men, and the falſeneſs of both. If ſhe returns virtuous, her virtue will be the more confirmed by the dangers ſhe has paſt; but how will ſhe eſcape the ſnares which environ her; the charms of flattery, the arts of ſeduction, the allurements of pleaſure?

pleaſure? When we know the world we learn to deſpiſe it, but too often the heart is led aſtray before reaſon has enlightened it. Oh, Lucila! cried he, looking at the picture of his wife, which in his ſolitude was his only companion! Oh, Lucila! you was once worthy of being happy! and I flattered myſelf you would have been ſo with me. Alas! perhaps even now ſome rake of quality, who prides himſelf in making families unhappy, is actually employed in ſeducing her innocence; ſhould he ſucceed, it places an eternal bar betwixt us. Ah! why did I abandon her? heaven had made me the guardian of her unthinking youth, but I left her to herſelf for fear of being thought a tyrant.

While Liſere remained in this cruel uncertainty, Lucila was not leſs agitated between the deſire of returning, and the

fear

fear of a repulſe. After having paſſed the night in ſighs and tears, ſhe would riſe with a reſolution of throwing herſelf at his feet, and aſking pardon; but a ſhame, to which the delicate mind is never inſenſible, always kept her back. If Liſere does not deſpiſe me, ſays ſhe, if he has ſtill any eſteem for me, ſince the time I have lived retired, why has he never deigned to ſee me? Every day in paſſing he enquired after her health; ſhe heard him, and hoped he would at laſt deſire to ſee her. Each day that hope was renewed, but ſtill diſappointed. She would have been glad Liſere had been informed of her repentance; but whom could ſhe employ in ſuch a mediation? Among all her friends ſhe did not know one, whoſe zeal and diſcretion rendered them equal to the taſk. A letter would have ſupplied the place; but in what words ſhould ſhe expreſs herſelf

have any effect on him, which would not humble herſelf too much? At length ſhe thought of an expedient, by which her too nice ſenſibility was not hurt.

Liſere was abſent two days; and Lucila took that opportunity to put her deſign in execution. The Marquis had an old valet who had long attended him; his zeal, honeſty, and diſcretion was well known to Lucila. She ſent for him. Ambroiſe, ſaid ſhe, I have a favour to aſk of you. Ah, Madam! ſaid the good man, command me: my whole ſoul is your's: would to God my lord and you loved each other as well as I love you both! It was formerly a pleaſure to ſee you together; and nothing afflicts me ſo much as this diſmal change. It is perhaps my fault, ſaid Lucila, humbly; but, my friend, the

evil

evil is not paſt remedy, if you will do what I deſire. Do you know if my picture is in your lord's chamber? Oh, yes Madam; he is very ſenſible of it, for he ſometimes ſhuts himſelf up whole days to converſe with your ſhadow; and convinces me how much more happy he would think himſelf to enjoy the converſation of yourſelf. You tell me things that give me the higheſt pleaſure, my good Ambroiſe, returned the lady: run, I beſeech you, and fetch the picture to me. Me, Madam! rob my lord of what is dearer to him than the world! Rather aſk my life. Be aſſured, replied Lucila, my deſign is not to deprive him of it. To-morrow night you ſhall replace it: all that I aſk is, that you will keep the ſecret from your lord. I will obey you, Madam, ſaid the faithful Ambroiſe. I know you are too

good

good to give my old age the chagrin of having offended my dear maſter.

He was as good as his word, and brought it to her that night. This picture had a tender languiſhing air, which was natural to the original; but her look was ſerene, and her hair dreſſed with flowers. She ſent for her painter, and deſired him to employ his art in making an alteration, to repreſent her in tears, and her hair hanging careleſsly over her ſhoulders. It was done: and the picture again placed in Liſere's apartment.

As ſoon as he returned, he retired to feaſt his eyes with this much-loved object: but what was his ſurprize, when he beheld her hair diſheveled, and tears falling down her cheeks. Ah! cried he.

Ah!

ah Lucila! are theſe the tears of repentance? is it the grief of returning love? it tranſports me. He flew to her, and found her in the ſame ſituation which the picture had repreſented. He ſtood looking at her tenderly for a moment, and then caught her in his arms: is it true then, ſaid he, that my dear wife is returned to me? Yes, replied Lucila ſighing, if you ſtill think her worthy of you. Can ſhe ever ceaſe to be ſo, returned Liſere embracing her? No, my lovely Lucila, be aſſured I never ſhall think of you but with tenderneſs, eſteem, and affection. You would not have returned to me, if the world had been able to ſeduce you, and this voluntary return is a proof of your virtue.

Heaven is my witneſs, ſaid ſhe, the tears ſtreaming from her eyes, I have nothing to reproach myſelf with but

weakneſs; I have been fooliſh, but I have been virtuous. If I doubted it, replied Liſere, ſhould I thus claſp thee in my arms with tranſport? Words are too weak to expreſs the raptures of two ſuch feeling hearts, who, after having groaned in a cruel ſeparation, were reunited for ever. Their real friends ſhared in the joy of their reconciliation, and the honeſt Ambroſe ſaid (his eyes moiſtened with tears) God be praiſed, I ſhall die content. From that time the tender union of this pair was quoted as an example. Their parting had convinced the world, that nothing could corrupt the goodneſs of their minds; for which reaſon it was juſtly ſtiled the HAPPY DIVORCE.

END of the THIRD TALE.

THE

THE PARTIAL MOTHER.

TALE IV.

AMONG the various errors and abſurdities to which human nature, in its preſent ſtate of frailty, is ſubject, I cannot forbear numbering, as a deteſtable one, the unnatural attachment of a partial mother, who, with a peculiar mark of attention, regards one of her children alone, excluding the reſt from the leaſt ſhare of her favour; but I would by no means, from this obſervation, wiſh the reader to imply that no diſtinction ſhould ariſe in the mind of one who is free from this unreaſonable prejudice, and therefore, through an impartial judgment, capable of diſcern-

ing between the tender plants ſhe labours to cultivate that which yields the moſt ſanguine aſſurances of crowning her endeavours with a ſuitable improvement; that which gives the earlieſt and moſt remarkable proofs of having retained ſentiments inſtilled into the mind by a virtuous education; and reaſonable preference given to this, whom her underſtanding obliges her to regard with a greater degree of approbation than ſhe doth the reſt (whoſe deficiency nevertheleſs ought not to exclude them from parental affection) is not only juſt, but even laudable. What I would here remark as a fault, that deſerves to be condemned in a mother, is, a blind and unjuſt prepoſſeſſion in favour of one particular child, on whom, without any ſuperior merit of its own to render it deſerving of ſuch diſtinction, ſhe fixes as the only object worthy of her care

and

and indulgence; and while ſhe permits this darling to engroſs all her attention in ſuch a manner, as not only totally to neglect the reſt, but even to behold them with a degree of deteſtation; this cruel and unjuſtifiable humour becomes ſo predominant in her mind as even to render her jealous of thoſe advantages that any one of the others, who have without real offence thus unfortunately incurred her diſpleaſure, may poſſibly obtain over this choſen favourite, whom ſhe fondly imagines poſſeſſed of every perfection, and to whom, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the reſt are as ſo many innocent victims, which ſhe unhappily makes a ſacrifice to this idol of her affection, without having the juſtice to conſider, that as ſhe has placed them in a world full of calamities and misfortunes, ſhe is obliged equally to extend to all her maternal care and protection, to prevent,

or at leaſt mitigate, thoſe evils to which life renders them ſubject; this is an error which, however common it may have become in the world, reflects much diſhonour on rational beings, of which I am going to give an example.

In one of our provinces bordering on the ſea coaſt, a governor, who was called Mandu Carandon, attracted univerſal eſteem and admiration, by judiciouſly applying that power with which he was intruſted to reſtrain violence and oppreſſion, and to redreſs the various grievances which every one laboured under, to the extent of his abilities; particularly adhering to this general rule of treating with lenity and favour thoſe unfortunate perſons who were become liable by their poverty to the injuries of their haughty ſuperiors, and of puniſhing with rigour their cruel oppreſſors, whom ſuperiority

ſuperiority of power enabled to tyrannize over, and diſtreſs thoſe, who, through the indigence of their conditions, were obliged to ſubmit. But as this good and benevolent diſpoſition of mind was rather calculated to make others happy than to enrich himſelf, this worthy man, who had employed his talents and great part of his ſubſtance in promoting publick as well as private good, quitted the world in ſuch narrow and diſtreſſed circumſtances as rendered him incapable of leaving behind him more than was ſufficient to ſatisfy the demands of his creditors. He had one daughter, whoſe haughty and arrogant temper, ſmall ſhare of beauty, and deficiency of fortune, having prevented her from receiving any offers of marriage, was at his death wholly unprovided for, and deſtitute of ſupport.

She was in this ſituation when a merchant, who had not only a very plentiful fortune, but great honeſty of principle, out of the reſpect which he bore to the memory of her father, for whom in his life-time he had entertained a very high eſteem and veneration, on account of ſome conſiderable ſervices he had done him as well as others of the ſame occupation, having received information of the place of her reſidence, reſolved to viſit her, and offer her his aſſiſtance. The generoſity of his temper carried him ſo far that he even thought it incumbent on thoſe who had been ſo particularly obliged to the father, to return the obligation by marrying the daughter: and as the ſucceſs which he met with in trade, had rendered him in a capacity of making her eaſy and happy for life, this worthy man, whoſe name was Coree, on the firſt interview he had with the

unfortunate

unfortunate daughter of his deceaſed friend, generouſly determined to make her the offer of his perſon and fortune; and hereupon propoſed himſelf with great humility to Mademoiſelle de Carandon: ſhe at length, though with a great deal of reluctance, conſented to the union; at the ſame time aſſuring herſelf of having the pleaſure of ruleing in his houſe with an abſolute authority; and in this ſhe was not miſtaken; for the high veneration he had for the memory of M. de Carandon, inſenſibly produced in his mind ſuch a great deference and reſpect for the opinion of the daughter, that on every matter of the leaſt importance he appealed to her judgment as to an oracle by which he was to regulate his actions: and if at any time it ſo happened, that through the difference of his diſpoſition, or the incongruity of her reaſoning, he found

found it difficult to acquieſce in her ſentiments, ſhe never omitted by her artful inſinuations to make him imagine, that the thoughts of her deceaſed father, M. de Carandon, would have been the ſame on the like occaſion: this always had the deſired effect; and Coree never failed, before ſhe had finiſhed, to ſubmit to the force of her arguments, and acknowledge himſelf in an error.

By theſe means ſhe obtained ſo entire an aſcendancy over him, as to be able even to influence his conduct in the laſt and moſt important action by which he could give her a proof of the prevalence of her father's example, and his own great flexibility of temper; for having two ſons, who were in their infancy when he found himſelf, though not advanced in years, afflicted with a diſeaſe which he apprehended would ſhortly

put

put a final period to his life, and thinking it not right to defer a matter of ſo much conſequence to his family, as that of ſettling the diſtribution which he intended to make of his fortune; he propoſed accordingly to appoint by will to each of his ſons that due proportion of his eſtate which he had alloted for their poſſeſſion after his deceaſe; but as the maxims of M. de Carandon had been always adopted by him as rules which were to govern his life, and obſerved by him as principles from which he never ſuffered himſelf to deviate, his lady artfully inſinuated that ſhe had often heard her father declare he thought the only means of making ſons dutiful to a widow mother, was to leave their fortunes in her power.

Her words had their uſual influence, and ſhe was left ſole guardian of the

two

two children; the eldeſt was her favourite, not becauſe he was more handſome or witty than the younger, but he being the firſt of her hopes, ſhe had exhauſted all her tenderneſs on him; in fine, ſhe loved him only; the little Jaquaut was the child of misfortune; his mother ſcarcely deigned to look on him, and never ſpoke to him but to chide, which intimidated the child ſo much that he never appeared before her without trembling. He has, ſhe would often ſay, the awkward gait of his father, and nothing of the look of a gentleman; at the ſame time ſhe looked with the moſt favourable eye on every act and geſture of M. de l'Etang, for that was the name of the eldeſt; his obſtinacy ſhe called greatneſs of mind; his perverſe humours, exceſs of ſenſibility: ſhe had maſters for him in every ſcience, who were to give leſſons only to him; and his brother had

no

no opportunity of learning but by catching the inſtructions which were given to the other, by which means he became in a few years a proficient in all thoſe ſtudies which were deſigned for M. de l'Etang, and of which he himſelf was totally ignorant: the good woman who had attended on his infancy, flattered the foible of the mother, by admiring this darling as a prodigy of wit and beauty.

The maſters, leſs complaiſant, complained of the indocility, and the inattention of this favourite ſon, at the ſame time that they dwelt on the praiſes of little Jaquaut; they did not plainly ſay M. de l'Etang was a dunce, but they ſaid his brother had the genius of an angel; the vanity of the mother was mortified; and by an injuſtice which we ſhould not believe to exiſt in nature,

if

if this vice was not too common among parents, ſhe redoubled her averſion for the little unfortunate, became jealous of his progreſs, and hated him for his daily improvement.

A touching incident awakened for a moment the tender ſentiments of a mother; Jaquaut was ten years old, and l'Etang fifteen, when Madam Coree fell into a dangerous diſorder; her eldeſt ſon, taken up wholly with his pleaſures, gave himſelf no concern for his mother's health, but the tender heart of Jaquaut was ſeized with grief; he longed to ſee his mother, but fear prevented him, as he had not been accuſtomed to appear before her without being called, but at length his impatient tenderneſs gave him courage; he ſaw the door of her apartment open, entered without noiſe, and, trembling at every

every ſtep, he approached the bed of his mother.

Is it you, my ſon, ſaid ſhe? No, Mamma, it is Jaquaut. This natural reply overwhelmed with grief and ſhame the ſoul of this unjuſt parent; but a viſit from her elder ſon drove theſe thoughts from her mind, and he regained his wonted aſcendancy over her.

As ſoon as Madam Coree's health was re-eſtabliſhed, the daily praiſes ſhe heard beſtowed on Jaquaut mortified her ſo much that ſhe determined to part with him; her pretence was, that l'Etang, naturally lively, was too ſuſceptible of diſſipation to allow of a companion in his ſtudies; alledging alſo, that the partiality of his tutors for the younger boy, whoſe ſervile manners flattered their pride, diſ-

couraged

couraged the elder, whoſe ſoul was too high to ſtoop to ſuch little arts; ſhe therefore determined that l'Etang ſhould be the only object of their care; and the unhappy Jaquaut was baniſhed to a college.

At ſixteen years old, l'Etang quitted the ſtudies of the mathematicks, languages, and muſick, for fencing, rideing, and other exerciſes; and at twenty appeared in the world with the aſſurance of a coxcomb, who talks of every thing, and thinks of nothing. In the mean while, Jaquaut made the greateſt proficiency in uſeful learning, whilſt his mother grieved at his praiſes, which were continually ſounding in her ears. Very well, ſays ſhe, ſince he is ſo wiſe, he ſhall be ſettled in the church: it is the thing he is beſt fitted for.

She ſent and propoſed it to him; unfortunately he had no inclination for an eccleſiaſtical life: he ventured to tell his mother ſo, and intreated her not to inſiſt upon it. Do you believe then, ſaid ſhe, with a cold ſevere air, that I can maintain you in idleneſs? You are miſtaken; your father's fortune was not ſo large as you may imagine; and I ſhall find a difficulty in ſettling your elder brother: as for you, Sir, try your fortune either in the church or the army; in one word, accept of a little living, or a pair of colours; that is all I can do for you. Jaquaut reſpectfully anſwered, he ſhould not think it beneath him to ſupport himſelf by trade.

At theſe words Madam de Coree exclaimed bitterly againſt her fate, in having brought into the world a ſon ſo unworthy of her, commanding him imdiately to quit her preſence. The un-

happy youth obeyed, ſighing at having incurred the diſpleaſure of his mother, and reſolved to try if fortune would be leſs cruel than nature. He heard that a veſſel was on the point of ſailing for the Indies, and determined to embark in it; he wrote to his mother and begged her conſent, her bleſſing, and what portion of money ſhe would pleaſe to allot him.

To this the mother readily agreed, and condeſcended to ſee him before his departure; ſhe even ſhed ſome tears as ſhe embraced him; and his brother had likewiſe the the tenderneſs to wiſh him a proſperous voyage: they were the firſt careſſes he had ever received from either of them, and very ſenſibly affected him. He wiſhed to hear of their welfare during his abſence, but could not depend on their granting him that favour; he therefore engaged a ſchoolfellow who

was

was his particular friend, to ſend him ſometimes news of his mother.

Madam de Coree had now no other care than to ſettle her favourite ſon: he choſe the law, obtained a diſpenſation from his terms, and very ſoon was called to the bar. There was nothing wanting at preſent but an advantageous marriage; his mother propoſed him to a rich heireſs; ſhe accepted his hand on condition the widow would ſettle the greateſt part of her fortune upon him, which ſhe had the weakneſs to conſent to, and reſerved to herſelf ſcarcely ſufficient to live upon, not doubting but that her ſon's fortune would be always at her diſpoſal.

In a few years time the wife and mother of M. de l'Etang found themſelves equally neglected; he was too faſhionable not to have an amour. A

young perſon whom he met with at the play ſtruck his fancy, he viſited her, ſhe received him with much politeneſs; he aſſured her he was charmed, ſhe eaſily believed it, and in a little time diſburthened him of ten thouſand crowns. But as this kind of love is not of an eternal duration, the falſe fair one quitted him in about three months after for a young Engliſh lord.

L'Etang reſolved to be revenged, by taking a miſtreſs much more famous; he made his addreſſes to one who held herſelf at a high price; he obtained her; and comparing his ſucceſs with that of a number of admirers who ſighed in vain, he prided himſelf on his conqueſt: nevertheleſs his beloved miſtreſs thought ſhe perceived ſome ſigns of jealouſy in him, and being willing to give him a proof of her love, propoſed they ſhould fly together

together to Paris, forget the world, and live only for each other. L'Etang was tranſported with this mark of her tenderneſs. They prepared for their journey, they ſet out, they arrived, and choſe for their retreat the neighbourhood of the court. Fatima, for that was the name of this beauty, aſked, and ſoon obtained, a coach to take the air in. L'Etang was ſurprized at the number of friends he found in this great town, people whom he had never ſeen, who, attracted by his merit, ſought his company; ſhe received them only as the acquaintance of l'Etang, and he was charmed with the reſpect which they paid to the darling of his ſoul.

This lovely creature had a ſuperſtitious belief in dreams: one night ſhe had one which nothing could efface from her mind. L'Etang was deſirous of knowing what made her ſo ſerious: I have

dreamt, ſaid ſhe, that I was in a delightful apartment; the bed and hangings of which was of the richeſt damaſk; the reſt of the furniture was equally ſuperb; but what ſtruck me moſt was, a complete toilet; I approached it, when what did I ſee! a ſet of jewels; the earrings were the moſt brilliant in the world. Certainly, Sir, this muſt portend ſomething ſingular; it has made a lively impreſſion, and my dreams never deceive me. M. l'Etang employed all his eloquence to perſuade her that dreams ſignified nothing. She inſiſted on it, that this ought to ſignify ſomething; and he at length, fearing a rival ſhould take advantage of his refuſal, complied, and made her a preſent of a ſet of jewels, and dreſſing plate. This indulgence gave her a taſte for dreaming ſo much, that poor Coree's eſtate was at laſt little more than a dream.

M. l'Etang's lady inſiſted on being ſeparated from a huſband who abandoned her; and the fortune he was obliged to allow her, put the finiſhing ſtroke to his own. Play was a reſource: l'Etang pretended to excel in piquet; his new friends flattered him in this notion whenever he was engaged with them at cards. Upon my honour, ſays one, he plays well: no one can play better, ſays the other; in fine, M. l'Etang played the beſt in the world, but he never had the ace. The faithful Fatima, perceiving his ruin, dreamt one night ſhe quitted him, and did it the next day.

In the midſt of theſe perplexities, his fond unfortunate mother, who had by her own folly reduced herſelf to the laſt diſtreſs, wrote to him for a ſupply of money: he replied, his affairs were deſperate; that ſo far from being able to

give her any ſuccour, he ſtood in need of it himſelf.

It is now time to enquire what became of the neglected Jaquaut: he arrived ſafely at St. Domingo. It is a known thing, that a Frenchman of genteel appearance is always well received in theſe iſlands. His behaviour very ſoon acquired him the confidence of the inhabitants; he purſued trade with vigour, it ſucceeded with him, and in the ſpace of five years he became the object of deſire to all the rich heireſſes and widows in the colony. But, alas! juſt at this juncture, the fatal news arrived of his brother's ruin, and that his mother, abandoned by all the world, was reduced to the moſt frightful extremities.

The letter which contained this dreadful intelligence was bathed with his tears.

Ah,

Ah, my mother, cried he! I will go myſelf to ſuccour her. I will not truſt to any other hand, leſt accident, infidelity, the negligence or lazineſs of a ſtranger ſhould prevent her from receiving aſſiſtance, and leave her to die in indigence and deſpair.

With theſe ſentiments Coree was more employed than with the care of his riches; he ſold all his poſſeſſions, and this ſacrifice coſt his heart nothing; but he could not help feeling great regret at parting with a treaſure more precious than any other America could yield him. Lucila, the young widow of an old planter, who had left her immenſe riches, had known Coree ſome time, and diſtinguiſhed him among all her acquaintance as a man where a fine underſtanding was joined with true integrity of heart. Coree on his ſide found her the only fair one worthy of captivating his

his ſoul. Lucila was bleſſed with a fine perſon; ſhe had a lively air, but perfectly modeſt; her complexion was brown, joined with the freſhneſs of the roſe; her hair was black as ebony, and her teeth white and poliſhed like pearl; ſhe had the gait of a nymph of Diana, with the ſmiling ſweetneſs and grace of a Venus: beſide all theſe outward ornaments, ſhe poſſeſſed that juſtneſs of ideas, that rectitude of ſentiment, which alone is truly valuable in man or woman. It was not one of the principles of Lucila to bluſh at a virtuous inclination. When Coree declared the ardent wiſhes of his ſoul, they were received by her with a modeſt ſenſibility, which grew more tender the more ſhe knew him. The difficulties that occurred in ſettling ſome affairs which the former huſband of Lucila had left in confuſion, for ſome time retarded their happineſs.

Theſe

Theſe were juſt finiſhed, and they were preparing for the deſired day, when the letter from the friend of Coree arrived, which, at one ſtroke, tore him from all that he held moſt dear. He immediately viſited his charming widow, ſhewed her the letter, and aſked her advice. I flatter myſelf you have no occaſion for any, replied ſhe; turn your eſtate into money, render your mother the duty you owe her, return to me, and my fortune is your's; if I die during your abſence my will makes it ſo; if I live you have a juſt title to all that is mine.

Coree, ſtruck with aſtoniſhment, ſeized the hands of this generous woman, and bathed them with his tears; but as he was endeavouring to thank her, ſhe rallied him to prevent it: this is one of your European prejudices, ſaid ſhe; if you find a woman tolerably honeſt,

you

you cry her up for a prodigy, as if nature had not given us ſouls. Would you think it a complement if I looked on you as a phenomenon becauſe you have a good heart? Pardon me, returned Coree, I do only my duty; but your principles, your ſentiments, your virtues, enchant me: I am ſtruck with admiration and ſurprize. Go, Sir, ſaid ſhe, viſit your mother, ſee her happily ſettled, and make your voyage as ſhort as poſſible.

Coree embarked, and took with him his whole fortune. His paſſage was proſperous until he arrived near the Canaries; but here the ſhip, purſued by a Corſair of Morocco, was obliged to ſeek her ſafety by flight. The corſair chaced, and was on the point of coming up with her, when the French captain, terrified with the fear of being boarded by the infidels, would have ſurrendered to the pirate.

pirate. Ah my poor mother, cried Coree! can I bear to reſign that fortune which was deſigned for her relief? No, continued he, filled with grief and rage; this barbarous African ſhall ſooner devour my heart. Then addreſſing himſelf to the captain, his crew, and the affrighted paſſengers, What, my friends, ſaid he, ſhall we give ourſelves up in this cowardly manner? Shall we ſuffer this robber to carry us to Morocco with our ſwords unſheathed, to ſell us there as beaſts? Are we unarmed? Are theſe people invulnerable, or are they braver than we? They will board us, very well, let them do it; we ſhall ſee who will be the victours. His reſolution cheered the dying ſpirits of the captain: he thanked him for having given ſuch an example, and prepared for defence.

They ſoon came to cloſe engagement; death flew from ſide to ſide, and the two ſhips

ſhips were inſtantly enveloped in a whirlwind of ſmoke and flame. At length the fire ceaſed, the day again appeared; they boarded each other, and fought ſword in hand: wherever the weapon of Coree fell it was fatal; his ardour was like that of a lioneſs who defends her whelps; it was the laſt effort of nature; the moſt tender, the moſt feeling ſoul in the world became in a moment the moſt furious, the moſt violent. The captain obſerved him, his eyes ſtriking fire, his arm drenched in blood. He called to his people, inflaming their courage by his example: behold, ſays he, the wonders he does! it is not a man who fights for us, it is a god.

Finally, Coree engaged the chief of the barbarians. My god, cried he, have pity on my mother! preſerve me for her ſake! Heaven heard the prayers of filial piety, for with one blow he ſtruck the

the pirate to the heart. From this moment victory was decided: the few which remained of the barbarian crew begged their lives, and were taken priſoners.

Coree arrived very ſoon on the coaſt of France; and this worthy ſon, without allowing himſelf one night's repoſe, flew to throw himſelf and his fortune at the feet of his unfortunate mother. He found her on the brink of the grave, and in a ſtate more frightful than death itſelf, deſtitute of all ſuccour, a prey to ſickneſs and indigence in the houſe of an old ſervant. The ſhame of her ſituation made her deſire to ſee no body but a worthy clergyman, and a charitable phyſician, who ſometimes viſited her.

Coree demanded admittance, but was refuſed. Tell her it is I, ſays he with impatience. And pray, Sir, what is your name?

name? Jaquaut, replied he. The ſervant acquainted the lady that a ſtranger deſired to ſee her. Alas! who is he, ſaid ſhe? He calls himſelf Jaquaut, Madam, returned the ſervant. At that name Mrs. Coree was ſo moved, that ſhe ſeemed ready to expire. As ſoon as ſhe recovered ſhe deſired to ſee him. When he entered the room, ah! my ſon, ſaid ſhe with a voice ſcarcely articulate, ah! my ſon, is it thus that you ſee your mother? your hand will now cloſe my eyes. What was the grief of this pious tender ſon, to ſee his mother, whom he had left in luxury and opulence, on an old bed, ſurrounded with poverty? Oh! my mother, cried he, throwing himſelf at her feet: his ſighs and tears then ſtifled his voice, and he was able to proceed no further. Heaven, replied ſhe, has puniſhed me for having too much loved an unnatural ſon, and having ———. Here Coree interrupted:

ed: All is well, my dear mother, ſays this amiable young man, if you but live; fortune has been bounteous to me. It is for your own ſake, my ſon, that ſhe has been ſo, replied the unhappy lady, for I am going to pay the debt of nature. Oh! may heaven preſerve your life, for my ſake alſo, returned he; I have enough to make that life agreeable. ——Ah! my dear child, if I deſire to live, it is to expiate my injuſtice, it is to love a ſon of whom I was not worthy, a ſon whom I have abandoned. At theſe words ſhe hid her face, as unworthy to ſee the light. Ah! Madam, cried he, preſſing her in his arms, deprive me not of the ſight of my mother; I have croſſed the ſea to ſeek and ſuccour her. At that moment the phyſician and clergyman entered.

Behold, ſays ſhe, my child, the only friends I have; without their charity I

ſhould have been no more. Coree embraced them. My worthy benefactors! what do I not owe to you? If you can, by your ſkill, your care, your comfort, reſtore my mother to me, my obligations will be laſting as my life. The phyſician prudently ſaw that this ſcene was too much for his patient. „ Go, Sir, ſays he, rely on our aſſiduity, and take no other care than to prepare a commodious lodging in a healthy ſituation, and the lady ſhall be immediately conveyed thither.

Change of air, good nouriſhment, or rather the joyful revolution, and the calm which ſucceeded it, inſenſibly reinvigorated, in Mrs. Coree, the organs of life. A deep melancholy had been the foundation of her illneſs; a relief from that was therefore her remedy.

Coree

Coree ſoon after heard his wretched brother had periſhed miſerably. I draw a veil over the frightful picture of his too-much merited death. They kept the knowledge of it from the partially tender-mother (who would, in all likelihood, have ſunk under this new misfortune) 'till her health was firmly eſtabliſhed: when ſhe firſt heard it, her heart was pierced with grief, and ſhe ſhed a flood of maternal tears, but comforted herſelf again with the reflection, that though heaven had taken from her a ſon unworthy of her tenderneſs, it had reſtored her one whoſe virtues merited all that nature could beſtow.

In a ſhort time he made her acquainted with his paſſion for Lucila, and propoſed to her to go with him into America, that he might at once enjoy the ſociety of his mother and his wife: Mrs. Coree embraced with joy the op-

portunity of leaving a place, which every day recalled her misfortunes, to pass into one where a change of scene might divert and dissipate the gloom of her thoughts, and her life glide on in tranquility and ease.

Heaven, which protects the good, blessed them with favourable winds: they arrived safe; and Lucila received the parent of her lover in the same manner she would have received her own. The marriage of these happy lovers was soon concluded, and their days rolled on in that serene felicity, those pure and calm delights which are the portion only of the virtuous.

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FINIS.